THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

An Illustrated Weekly Magazine
Founded A°. D^t. 1728 *by* Benj. Franklin

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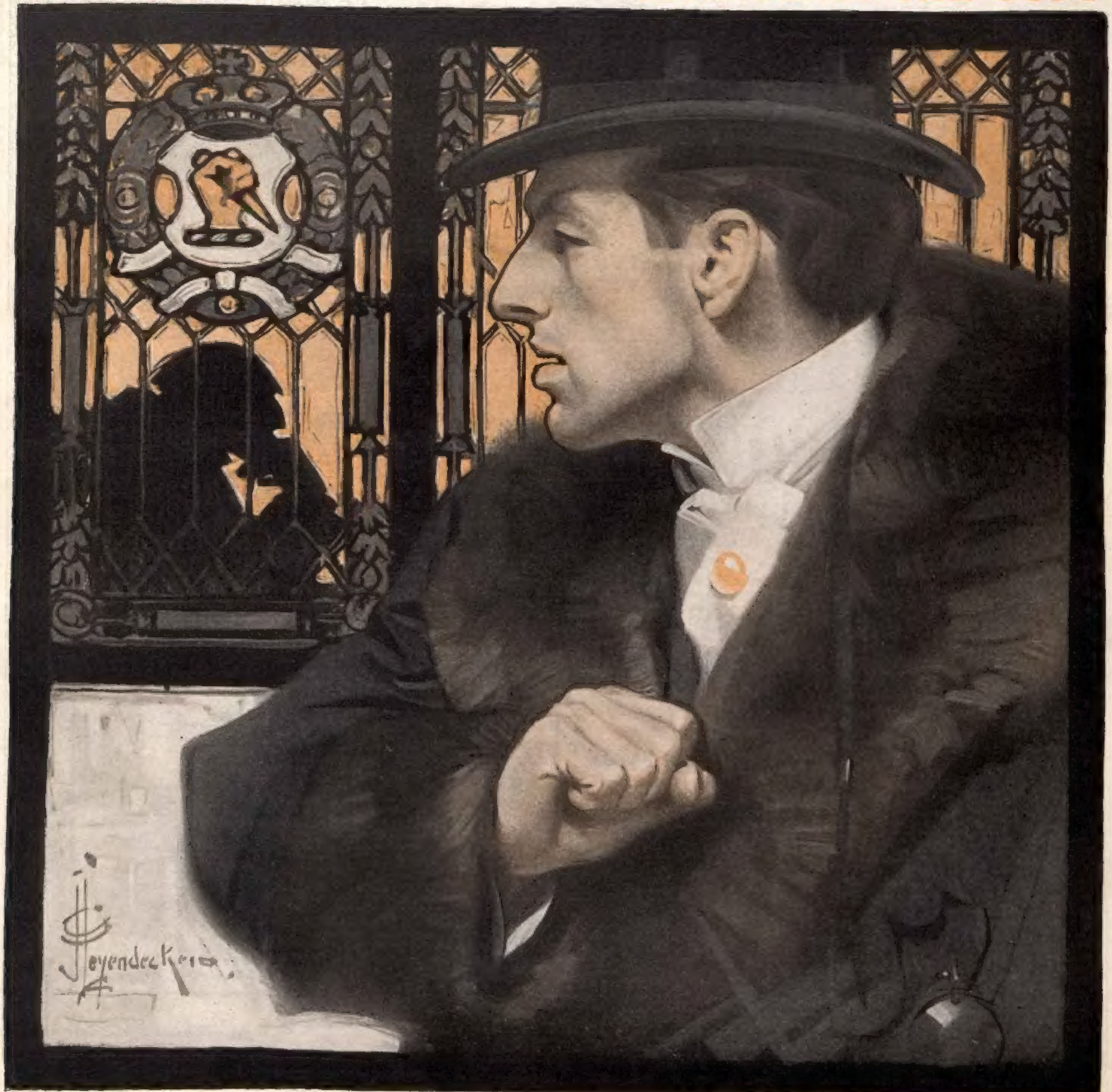
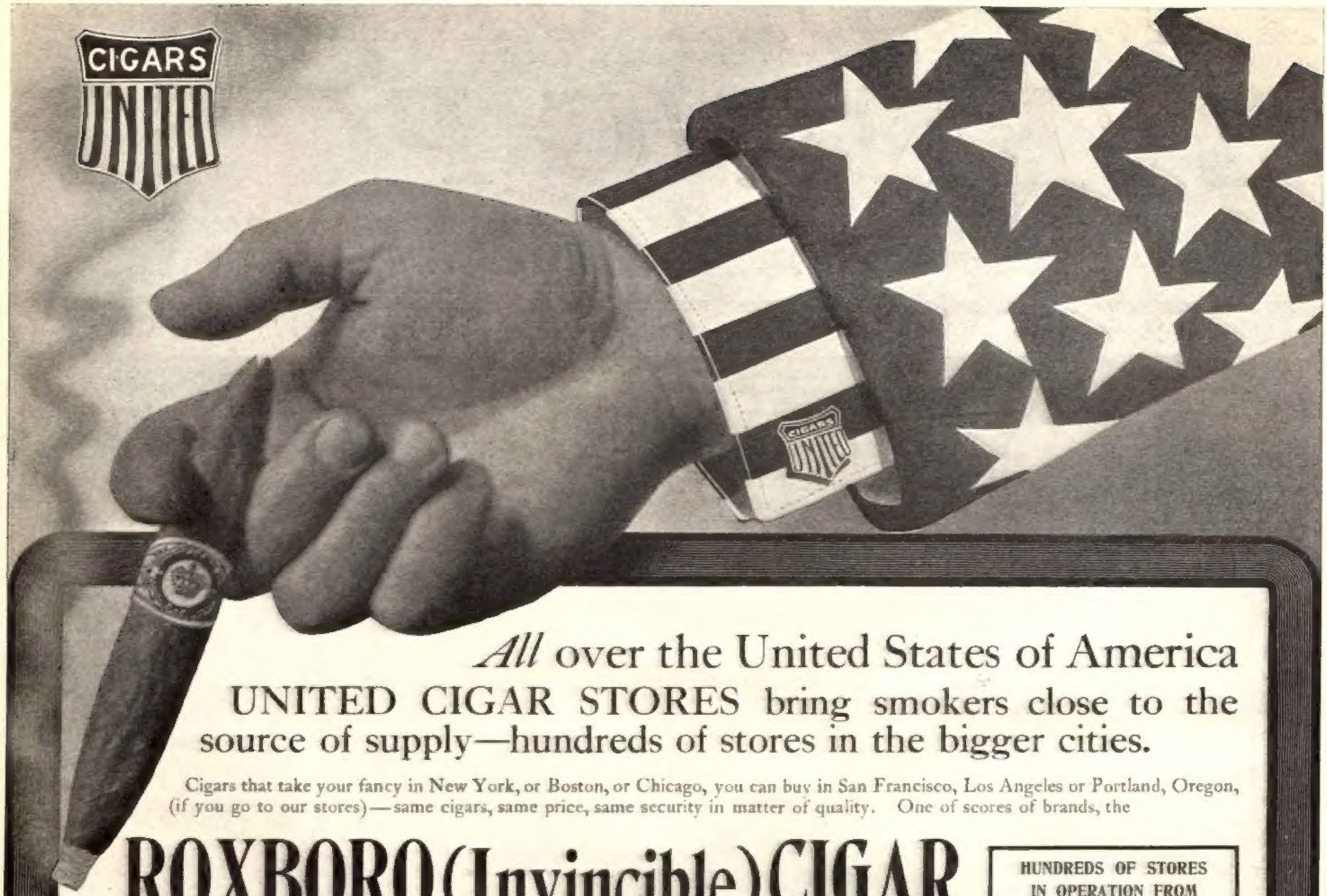


MORTMAIN—By Arthur Train



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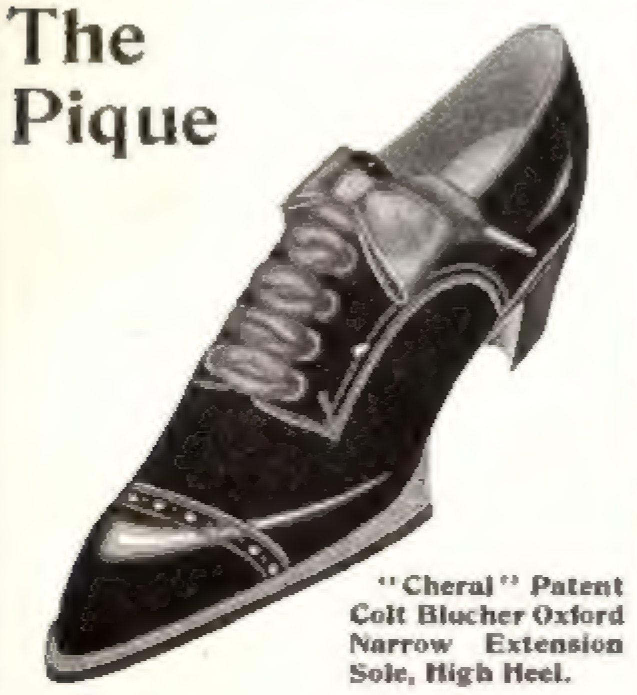

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A Brief History

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST is the oldest journal of any kind that is issued today from the American press. Its history may be traced back in a continuous, unbroken line to the days when young Benjamin Franklin edited and printed the old Pennsylvania Gazette. In nearly one hundred and eighty years there has been hardly a week—save only while the British army held Philadelphia and patriotic printers were in exile—when the magazine has not been issued.

During Christmas week, 1728, Samuel Keimer began its publication under the title of the Universal Instructor in all Arts and Sciences and Pennsylvania Gazette. In less than a year he sold it to Benjamin Franklin, who, on October 2, 1729, issued the first copy under the name of the Pennsylvania Gazette. Franklin sold his share in the magazine to David Hall, his partner, in 1765. In 1805 the grandson of David Hall became its publisher. When he died, in 1821, his partner, Samuel C. Atkinson, formed an alliance with Charles Alexander, and in the summer of that year they changed the title of the Gazette to THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

The New Young Man

The lie that a young man has no chance in these days of vast combinations of capital is nailed every time another leader appears. If there's any one thing that is not listed among antiques it is opportunity.

A dozen young men—in no immediate danger of the dead-line—are to-day in the glare of the lime-light. They started under circumstances as widely separated as the poles. None has achieved his goal yet, for none has finished his life. But all have had enough success to make people sit up and ask questions.

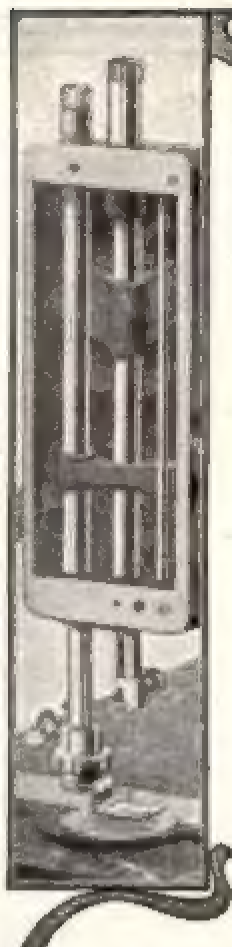
It is these questions that THE SATURDAY EVENING POST will answer in a series of brilliant interviews and vivid pen-pictures by Alfred Henry Lewis. Mr. Lewis is touring the country looking into the work of this new race of young men. He will discover what they stand for, what they are trying to do and how they hope to do it. It is a brilliant and inspiring example of the higher journalism.

Joseph Conrad's New Story

A dull fellow was Gaspar Ruiz; of no wit and no great understanding. Merely childlike and simple and of extraordinary physical strength. He was shot as a deserter; surely he was shot! Did not the little sergeant see him lying there among the huddled forms of the other dead deserters, and did not the little sergeant make a long gash across the giant's neck with his sword to make sure of that strong man's death?

Yet the adventures that afterward befell Gaspar are the most amazing that have been published for a long time. And in the hands of that incomparable artist, Joseph Conrad, the story must be ranked as the best fiction of the year.

We shall begin the publication of Gaspar Ruiz very soon; and those of our readers who have not read Joseph Conrad's novels will, we feel sure, owe us a debt of gratitude for making them acquainted with Mr. Conrad through the medium of this remarkable story.



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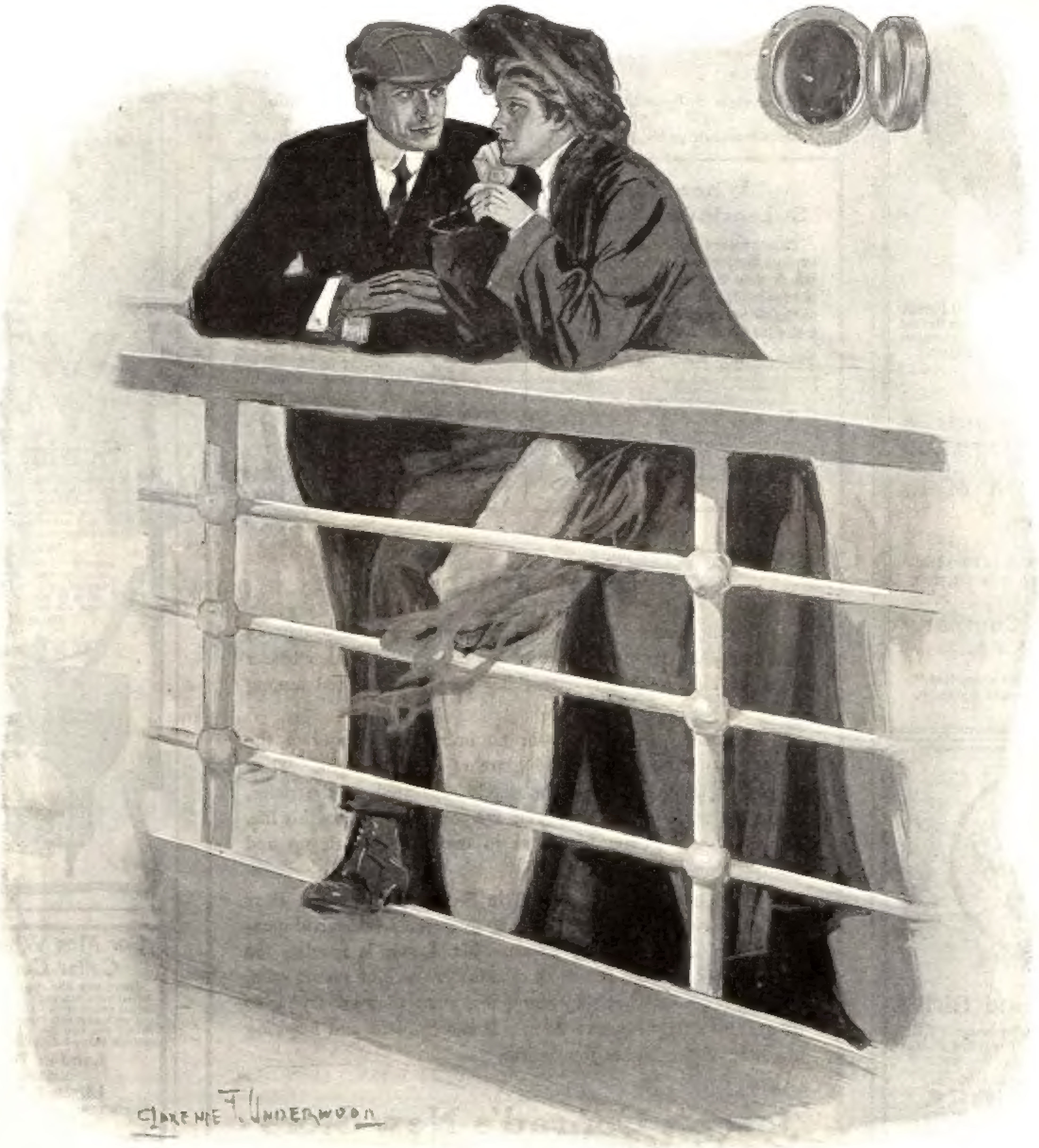

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It is a mistake to suppose that you can buy good soap "anywhere in Europe."

The fact is, that outside of the big cities, it is almost impossible to obtain it. A few of the hotels furnish individual cakes of soap for the use of guests. But, as a rule, it is not satisfactory.

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MORTMAIN

BY ARTHUR TRAIN

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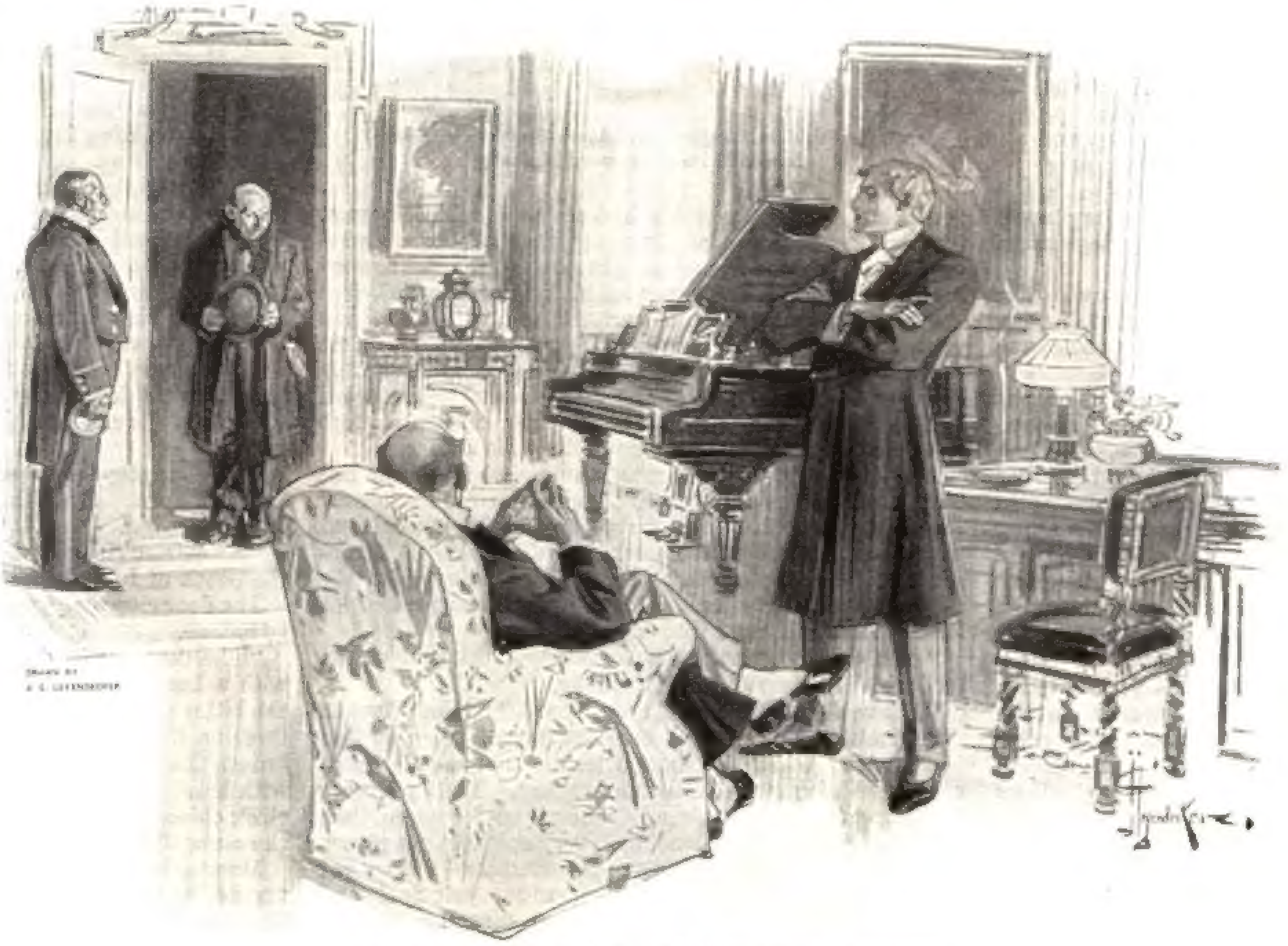


A Nondescript, Undersized Man Cringingly Entered the Room

SIR PENNISTON CRISP was a man of some sixty active years, whose ruddy cheeks, twinkling blue eyes and convincingly innocent smile suggested forty. At thirty he had been accounted the most promising young surgeon in London; at forty he had become one of the three leading members of his profession; at fifty he had amassed a fortune and had begun to accept only those cases which involved complications of true scientific interest, or which came to him on the personal application of other distinguished physicians.

Like many another in the medical world whose material wants are guaranteed, he found solace and amusement only in experimentation along new lines of his peculiar hobbies. His days were spent between his book-lined study with its cheery sea-coal fire and his adjacent laboratory, where three assistants, all trained Bachelors of Science, conducted experiments under his personal direction.

His daily life was as well ordered as his career had been. Rising at seven, Sir Penniston partook of a meagre breakfast, attended to his trifling personal affairs, read his newspaper, dictated his letters, and by nine was ready to don his uniform and receive his sterilized instruments from his young associate, Scalscope Jermyn, a capable and cheerful soul after Crisp's own heart. An operating-theatre adjoined the laboratory, and here the baronet made it a point to perform once each week, in the presence of various surgeons who attended by invitation, a few difficult and dangerous operations upon patients sent to him from the City Hospital.

When Jermyn was with his familiars he was wont to refer to his master as the "howlingist cheeze in surgery." This was putting it mildly, for, although Sir Penniston was indubitably, if you choose, quite the "howlingist cheeze" in surgery, he was also a pathfinder, an explorer into the mysteries of the body and the essence of vitality in bone and tissue. He could do more things to a cat in twenty minutes than would naturally occur in the combined history of a thousand felines. He could handle the hidden arteries and vessels of the body as confidently and accurately as you or I would tie a shoestring. He had housed a tramp for thirteen months and inserted a plate-glass window in that gentleman's exterior in order that he might with the greater certainty study the complicated processes of a digestion stimulated after a hitherto chronic lack of food. He experimented on men, women, children, elephants, apes, ostriches, guinea-pigs, rabbits, turtles, frogs and goldfish. He could alter the shape of a nose, or perfect an irregular ear in the twinkling of an instrument; remove a human heart and insert it still beating without inconvenience to its owner; and was as much at home among the vessels of Thebesius as he was on Piccadilly Circus.

He was single, kept but one servant—a Jap—neither smoked nor drank, attended the worst play he could find every Saturday night, and gave ponderous dinners to his professional brethren on Wednesdays. He was the dean of his order and bade fair to remain so for a long time to come—a calm, passionless craftsman in flesh and bone. His rivals frequently were heard to say that there was nothing surgical in Heaven or earth that Crisp would not undertake. A faint odor of chloroform followed his well-regulated progress through existence.

On the morning upon which this narrative opens Sir Penniston had entered his laboratory with that urbanity so characteristic of him. A white frock hung jauntily upon his well-filled, if slenderly-nourished, proportions, his blue eyes sparkled with good-natured activity, and his long, muscular hands rubbed themselves together in a manner which signified that they were anxious to be at the skilled work in which their owner took so keen a pleasure. Scalscope was already on hand, and with a bundle of dripping instruments in his grasp met his master half-way between the minor operating-table and the antiseptic bath.

"Ah, good-morning, Scalscope! How is the Marchioness of Cheshire this fine morning?"

Scalscope smiled deferentially at the little joke.

"I presume you mean Lady Tabitha? Her ladyship is doing splendidly—better, I fancy, than could be expected under the circumstances."

"Excellent, Scalscope! Delightful! Where is she?"

At that moment a large Maltese cat, cognizant by some unknown instinct that she was the subject of this matutinal conversation, stalked slowly out of a patch of sunshine and rubbed herself between Sir Penniston's broadcloth-covered calves. The surgeon bent over and felt carefully of her foreleg, but the feline did not flinch; on the contrary, she screwed round her head and thrust it into the doctor's hand.

"Perfect!" exclaimed Sir Penniston, his face lighting with a smile of scientific satisfaction. "Absolutely perfect! Scalscope, you have lived to participate in the highest achievement of modern surgery! Is the patient in the operating-room? Very good. The gentlemen assembled? Excellent! While you are administering the somni-chloride I will announce our success."

He bowed to the other assistants and, followed by the Marchioness of Cheshire, opened the door which led to the platform of the operating-theatre. Some dozen or fifteen professional-looking gentlemen rose as he made his appearance and bowed. A young woman with her arm in a sling sat by the table attended by a couple of women nurses.

"Good-morning, gentlemen! Good-morning!" remarked Sir Penniston. "Mr. Jermyn, will you kindly prepare the patient? My friends, I have the pleasure of being able to announce to you, and thus in a measure to permit you to share in, what I regard as the most extraordinary achievement of our profession."

A murmur of interest and appreciation made itself audible from the physicians who had resumed their seats upon the benches. If Sir Penniston regarded anything as remarkable, it must indeed be so, and they awaited his next words expectantly.

"The problem, gentlemen, of limb-grafting has been solved!" he announced modestly.

The assembled surgeons gazed at one another in amazement.

"You may perhaps recall," continued the baronet, "that it has for years been my particular hobby, or, I should more properly say, theory, that there was no reason in the world why, if a severed finger or a nose could be replaced by surgery, the same should not be true of a major part, such as a hand or leg; and that if a limb once severed could be replaced upon its stump, why another person's might not be used.

"Many gentlemen eminent in our profession, some of whom I believe I see before me, gave it as their opinion that such an operation was impossible. A few—and most of these, I regret to say, were upon the other side of the Atlantic—agreed with me that it could and would ultimately be accomplished. I studied the problem for years. Was it our inability to nourish a part once severed or so to reënervate it as to unite tendons, muscles or bone? The latter surely gave no trouble. Tendons were sutured every day, and under favorable circumstances their functions were restored; nerves were frequently sutured and functional restoration recorded.

"The question, therefore, seemed to narrow itself down to whether or not it was impossible to restore an arterial supply once cut off. Veins, of course, were frequently cut and sutured, and performed perfectly afterward. Was there no way to restore an artery? In other words, could a limb once severed be sufficiently nourished to restore it? This, then, became my special study—a fascinating study indeed, involving as it did the possibilities of untold benefit to mankind."

Sir Penniston paused and glanced toward the table upon which was extended the now almost unconscious form of the patient. There was still plenty of time for him to conclude his remarks.

"With a view, therefore, to observing whether a thin glass tube would be tolerated in a sterilized state within an artery (the only possible means I could devise to allow a continued flow of blood and contemporaneous restoration) I made a number of half-inch pieces to suit the calibre of a dog's femoral, constricted them very slightly to an hour-glass shape, and smoothed their ends by heat, so that no surface roughness should induce clotting. Cutting the femorals across, I tied each end on the tube by a fine silk thread, and tied the thread ends together. Primary union resulted, and the dog's legs were as good as ever! The first step had been successfully accomplished."

The assembled surgeons clapped their hands faintly in token of appreciation, and one or two murmured, "My word! — Extraordinary! — Marvelous!" Sir Penniston bowed slightly and resumed:

"I now added one more step to my experiments. I dissected out the trachial artery and vein near the axilla of a dog's fore-limb, and, holding these apart, amputated the limb through the shoulder muscles and sawed through the bone, leaving the limb attached only by the vessels. I then sutured the bone with a silver wire and the nerves with fine silk. Each muscle I sutured by itself with catgut, making a separate series of continuous suturing of the *fascia lata* and skin. The leg was then enveloped in sterilized dressing, a liberal use of iodoform gauze being the essential part. Over all, cotton and a plaster jacket were placed, leaving him three legs to walk on. The dog's leg united perfectly."

The assembled gentlemen broke into loud applause. The patient was lying motionless, her deep inspirations showing that she was under the anæsthetic. But Sir Penniston was now lost in the enthusiasm of his subject.

"Thus, gentlemen, I demonstrated that, if in an amputated limb an artery could be left, the limb would survive the division and reuniting of everything else, and had good ground for the belief that if an arterial supply could be restored to a completely amputated limb, *that* limb also might be grafted back to its original or to a corresponding stump.

"The final experiment only remained — the complete amputation of a limb and its restoration — a combination of all the others — difficult, dangerous, delicate — and requiring much preparation, assistance and time. I finally selected a healthy cat, amputated its foreleg, inserted a glass tube in the artery, and sutured bone, muscles, nerves and skin. Complete restoration occurred! And after four months you have here before you this morning the cat herself, fat, well and strong, and as good as ever! — Here kitty, kitty, kitty!"

The Marchioness of Cheshire ran quickly to Sir Penniston and leapt into his lap, while the gentlemen left the benches and hastened forward to seize the master's hand and to examine the cat in wonder.

"There is nothing, therefore, in the way of grafting which cannot be successfully undertaken. A human arm or leg crushed at thigh or shoulder, and requiring amputation, would admit of Esmarch's bandage being applied to expel its blood and of being used after amputation. Why not another man's blood as well as its owner's? No reason in the world! Had we here a suitable forearm ready to be applied I have no doubt but that I could successfully replace it upon the stump of the one I am now about to remove. Hereafter so long as there are limbs enough to go round — so long as the demand does not transcend the supply — none of our patients need fear the permanent loss of a member!"

The surgeons overwhelmed him with their congratulations, but Sir Penniston modestly waived them aside. His triumph was the triumph of science — and its purity was not marred by any thought of personal glorification.

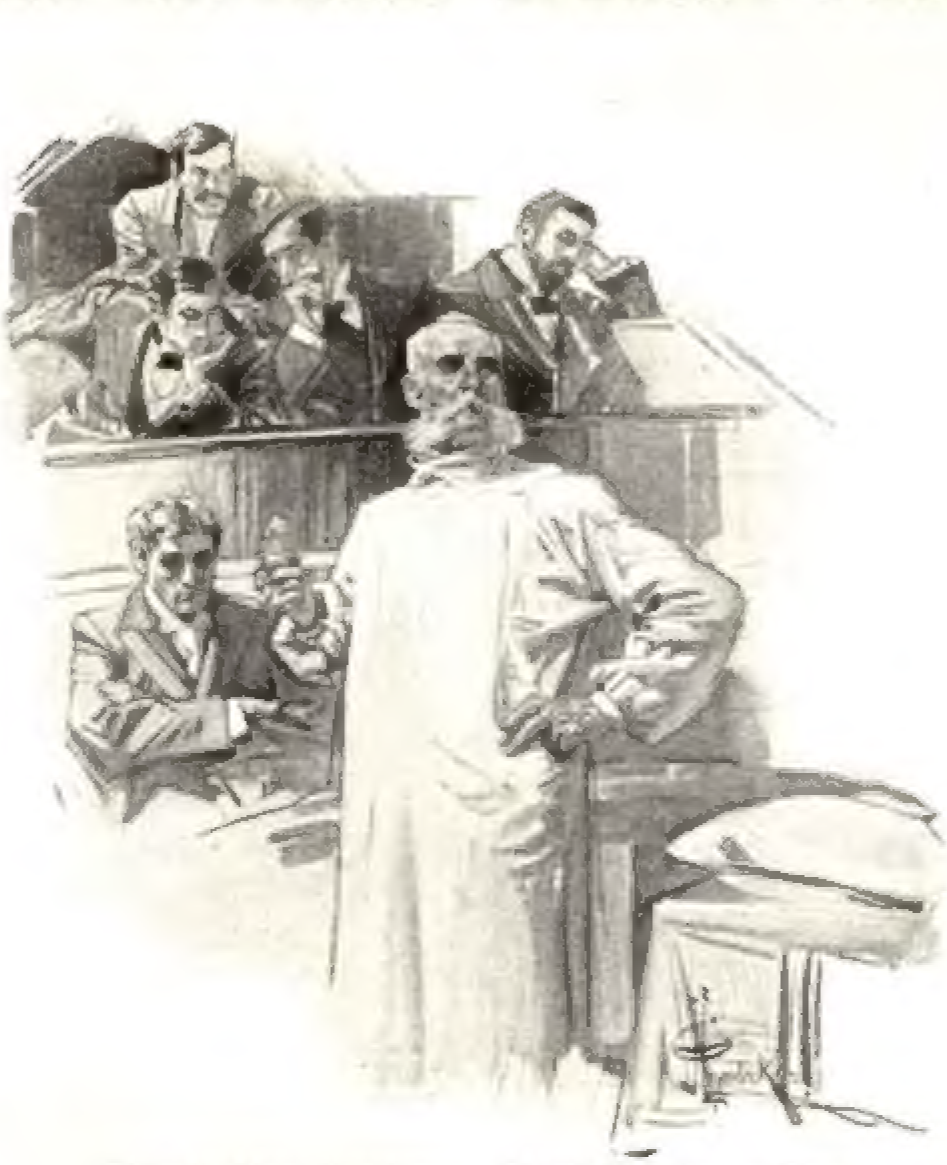
"The Crispan operation," some one whispered. The others caught it up. "The Crispan operation," they repeated. A slight look of gratification made itself apparent upon Sir Penniston's rosy countenance.

"Thank you, gentlemen! Thank you! Mr. Jermyn, is the patient quite ready? Yes? We will proceed, gentlemen. My instruments, if you please."

Among those who left the operating theatre an hour later was Sir Richard Mortmain.

II

THE opalescent light from the bronze electric lamp on the mahogany writing-table disclosed two gentlemen, whose attitudes and expressions left no doubt as to the serious import of their discussion. At the same time the *membra disjecta* of afternoon tea which remained upon the teak tabaret, together with the still smoking butt of an Egyptian cigarette distilling its incense in a steadily perpendicular gray column toward the ceiling from a jade jar used as an ash receiver, showed that for one of them at least the situation had admitted of physical amelioration. The gentleman beside the table had rested his high, narrow forehead upon the delicate fingers of his left hand, and with contracted eyebrows was gazing in a baffled manner toward his companion, who had extended his limbs at length before the heavy chair in which he reclined, and with his elbows upon its arms was holding his finger-tips lightly against each other before his face. To those who knew Ashley Flynt of the Inner Temple this meant that the last word had been spoken and that nothing remained but to accept the situation as he stated it and follow his advice.



"The Problem, Gentlemen, of Limb Grafting has Been Solved!" He Announced Modestly

His heavy yet shrewd countenance, whose florid hue bespoke a modern adjustment of golf to a more traditional use of port, had that cold, vacant look which it displayed when the mind behind the mask had recorded Q. E. D. beneath its unseen demonstration. The gentleman at the table twitched his shoulders nervously, slowly raised his head and leaned back into his chair.

"And you say that there is absolutely nothing which can be done?" he repeated mechanically.

"I have already told you, Sir Richard," replied Flynt in even, incisive tones, "that the last day of grace expires to-morrow. Unless the three notes are immediately taken up you will be forced into bankruptcy. Your property and expectations are already mortgaged for more than they are worth. Your assets of every sort will not return your creditors — I should say your creditor — fifteen per cent. Seventy-nine thousand pounds, principal and interest — can you raise it or even a substantial part of it? No, not five thousand! You have no choice, so far as I can see, but to go into bankruptcy, unless ——" he hesitated rather deprecatingly.

"Well!" cried Sir Richard impatiently, "unless ——?"

"Unless you marry."

The other drew himself up and a flush crept into his cheeks and across his forehead.

"As your legal adviser," continued Flynt unperturbed, "I give it as my opinion that your only alternative to bankruptcy is a suitable marriage. Of course, for a man of your position in society a mere engagement might be enough to ——"

Sir Richard sprang quickly to his feet and stepped in front of his solicitor.

"To induce the money-lenders to advance the amount necessary to put me on my feet? Bah! Flynt, how dare you make such a suggestion! If you were not my solicitor ——! Good Heavens, that I should ever be brought to this!"

Flynt shrugged his shoulders.

"If you come to that, bankruptcy is the cheapest way to pay one's debts."

His client uttered an ejaculation of disgust. Then suddenly the red deepened in his cheeks and he clenched his white hand until the thin blue veins stood out like cords.

"Curse him!" he cried in a voice shaken by anger. "Curse him now and hereafter! Why did I ever take advantage of his pretended generosity? He meant to ruin me! Why was I ever born with tastes that I could not afford to gratify? Why must I surround myself with music and flowers and marbles? He saw his chance, stimulated my extravagance, seduced my intellect, and now he casts me into the street a beggar! I hate him, hate him, *hate* him! I believe I could *kill* him!"

Sir Richard turned quickly. The door had opened to admit the silent, deferential figure of Joyce, the butler.

"Pardon me, Sir Richard. A clerk from Mr. Flynt's office, sir, with a package. Shall I let him in?"

Mortmain still stood with his fist trembling in midair, and it was a moment before he regained sufficient control of himself to reply:

"Yes, yes; let him in."

The butler nodded to some one just behind him, and a nondescript, undersized man cringingly entered the room and stood hesitatingly by the threshold.

"Have you the papers, Flaggs?" inquired Flynt.

"Here, sir," replied the other, drawing forth a bundle tied in red tape and handing it to his employer.

"Very good. You need not return to the office again. Good-night."

"Good-night, sir. Thank you, sir," mumbled Flaggs, and, casting a furtive, beetling glance in the direction of Sir Richard, he shambled out.

The solicitor followed him with his eye until the door had closed behind him and then shrugged his shoulders for the second time.

"My dear Sir Richard," he remarked, "many of our most distinguished peers have gone through bankruptcy. It will all be the same a year hence. Society will be as glad as ever to receive you. Your name will command the same respect and likely enough the same credit. Bankruptcy is still eminently respectable. As for Lord Russell — try to forget him. It is enough that you owe him the money."

Mortmain's anger had been followed by the reaction of despair. Now he groped for a cigarette and, drawing a jeweled match-box from his pocket, lit it with trembling fingers.

Flynt arose.

"That's right," he exclaimed; "just be sensible about it. Meet me to-morrow at my office at ten o'clock and we will call in Lord Russell's solicitors for a consultation. It will be amicable enough, I assure you. Well, I must be off. Good-night." He extended his hand, but Mortmain had thrust his own into his trousers' pockets.

"And you say nothing can prevent this?"

"Why, yes," returned Flynt in a sarcastic tone; "I believe two things can do so."

"Indeed," remarked Sir Richard. "What may they be?"

Flynt had stepped impatiently to the door, which he now held half open. Sir Richard had failed to send him a draft for his last bill.

"A fire from Heaven to consume the notes — coupled with the death of Lord Russell — or your own. Good-night!"

The door closed abruptly and Sir Richard Mortmain was left alone.

"The death of Lord Russell or my own!" he repeated with a harsh laugh. "Agreeable fellow, Flynt!" Then the bitter smile died out of his face and the lines hardened. Over on the heavy onyx mantel, between two grotesque bronze Chinese vases from whose ponderous sides dragons with bristling teeth and claws writhed to escape, a Sèvres clock chimed six, and was echoed by a dim booming from the outer hall.

Mortmain glanced with regret about the little den that typified so perfectly the futility of his luxurious existence. The deadened walls admitted hardly a suggestion of the traffic outside. By a flower-set window the open piano still held the score of La Giaconda, the opening performance of which he was to attend that evening with Lady Bella Forsythe. A bunch of lilies-of-the-valley stood at his elbow upon the massive table that never bore anything upon its polished surface save an ancient manuscript, an etching, or a vase of flowers. Delicate cabinets showed row upon row of grotesque Capodimonte, rare Sèvres, porcelains, jade and Dresden, and other examples of ceramic art. Two Rembrandts, a Coré, and a profile by Whistler occupied the wall space. The mantel was given over to a few choice antique bronzes, covered with verdigris. The only concession to modern utilitarianism was an extension telephone standing upon a bracket in the corner behind the fireplace.

The only surviving member of his family, Mortmain had inherited from his father, Sir Mortimer, a discriminating intellect and artistic tastes, united with a gentle, engaging and unambitious disposition, derived from his Italian mother. Carelessly indifferent to his social inferiors, or those whom he regarded as such, he was brilliantly entertaining with his equals — a man of moods, keenly sensitive to public opinion, conservative in habit, yet devoted to society, expensive in his mode of life, given to hospitality — and a spendthrift. These qualities combined to make him caviare to the general, an enigma to the majority, and the favorite of the few, whose favorite he desired to be. He had never married, for his calculation and his laziness had jumped together to convince him that he could be more comfortable, more independent, and more free to pursue his music and kindred tastes, if single. Altogether, Sir Richard, though perhaps a trifle selfish, and entirely a sensualist, was by no means a bad fellow, and one whose temperament fitted him to be what he was — a leader in matters of taste, a connoisseur, and an esteemed member of the gay world.

No doubt, as Flynt had suggested, he could have liberated himself financially by donning the golden shackles of an aristocratic marital slavery. But his soul revolted at the thought of marrying for money, not so much at the moral aspect of it as because a certain individual tranquillity had become necessary to his mode of life. He was forty and a creature of habit. A conventional marriage would have been as intolerable as earning his living. On the other hand, the odium of a bankruptcy proceeding, the publicity, the vulgarity of it, and the loss of prestige and position which it would necessarily involve brought him face to face with the only alternative which Flynt had flung at him in parting—the death of Lord Russell or his own.

He had known that without being told. Months before, the silver-mounted pistol which was to round out his consistently inconsistent existence had been concealed among the linen in the bureau of his Louis XIV bedroom, but it was to be invoked only when no other course remained. That nothing else did remain was clear. Flynt had read his client's sentence in that brutally unconscious jest.

On the day of his interview with Flynt he was one of the most highly-regarded critics of music and art in London, and his own brilliant accomplishments as a virtuoso had been supplemented by a lavish generosity toward struggling painters and musicians who found easy access to his purse and table, if not to his heart.

He had introduced Hauptmann, the Austrian pianist, to the musical world at a heavy financial loss and had made several costly donations to the British Museum, in addition to which his collection of scarabs was one of the most complete on record and required constant replenishing to keep it up to date. His expensive habits had required money and plenty of it, and when his patrimony had been exhausted he had mortgaged his expectations in his uncle's estate to launch the Austrian genius. It had been a lamentable failure. Mortmain's friends had said plainly enough that Hauptmann could play no better than his patron. This of itself implied no mean talent, but the public had resolutely refused to pay five shillings a ticket to hear the pianist, and the money was gone. Sir Richard had found himself in the hollow position of playing Mæcenas without the price, and rather than change his pose and his manner of life had borrowed twenty-five thousand pounds four years before from an elderly peer, who combined philanthropy and what some declared to be usury with a high degree of success.

There were those who hinted that this eminently respectable aristocrat robbed Peter more than he paid Paul, but Lord Gordon Russell was a man with whose reputation it was not safe to take liberties. The next year Mortmain had renewed his note, and, in order to save his famous collection from being knocked down at Christie's, had borrowed twenty-five thousand pounds more. The same thing happened the year after, and now all three notes were three days overdue.

Sir Richard responded to the announcement of the little Sèvres clock by pressing a button at the side of his desk, which summons was speedily answered by the stolid Joyce.

"My fur coat, if you please, Joyce."

"Very good, sir." Joyce combined the eye of an eagle with the stolidity of an Egyptian mummy.

Mortmain arose, stepped to the fire, rubbed his thin, carefully-kept fingers together, then seated himself at the piano and played a few chords from the overture. As he sat there he looked anything but a bankrupt peer upon the eve of suicide—rather one would have said, a young Italian musician, just ready to receive and enjoy the crowning pleasures of life. The thin light of the heavily-shaded lamps brought out the ivory paleness of his face and hands, and the delicate, sensitive outline of his form, as with eyes half closed and head thrown back he ran his fingers with facile skill across the keyboard.

"Your coat is here, sir," said Joyce.

Mortmain arose and presented his arms while the servant deftly threw on the seal-lined garment, and handed his master his silk hat, gloves and gold-headed stick.

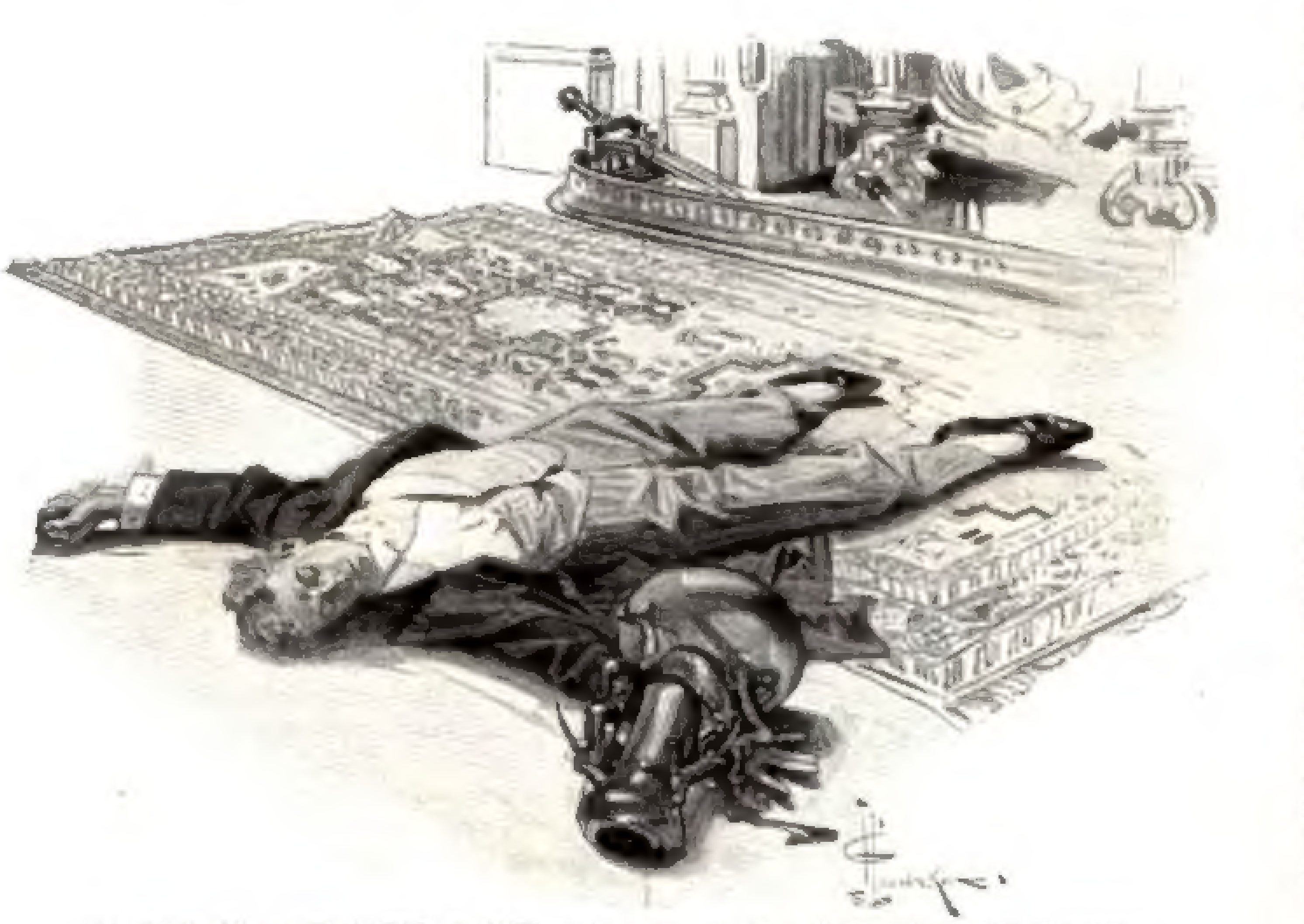
"I am going for a short walk, Joyce. I shall be back by seven. You can reach me at the club, if necessary."

Joyce held open the door of the study and then hurried ahead through the luxuriously furnished hall to push open the heavy door at the entrance. On the threshold Mortmain turned and, looking Joyce in the eye, said sharply:

"Why did you let that fellow Flaggs follow you to the door of my study, instead of leaving him in the hall?"

"I beg pardon, sir," replied the servant, "but he slipped behind me afore I knew it, sir. He was a rum one, anyway, sir—a bit in liquor, I fancy, sir."

Mortmain turned and passed out without reply. He hated intruders and had not liked the way in which Flynt had calmly received the clerk in his private study. On the whole, he regarded the solicitor as presuming.



The Little Sèvres Clock Ticked off Forty Seconds and Then Softly Chimed the Quarter, While the Blood from the Baronet's Hand Spurted in a Tiny Stream upon the Rug

It was dark already and the street lamps glowed nebulously through the gathering fog. The air was chilly, and a thick mealy paste, half sleet, half water, formed a sort of icing upon the sidewalk which made walking slippery and uncomfortable. Few people were abroad, for fashionable London was in its clubs and boudoirs, and the workers thronged in an entirely different direction.

The club was but a few streets away and it was only ten minutes after the hour when he entered it and strolled carelessly through the rooms. No one whom he cared particularly to see was there, and the fresh, if bitter, December air outside seemed vastly preferable to the stuffy atmosphere of the smoke-filled card and reading rooms. Therefore, as he had nearly an hour before it would be time to dress, he left the club, and with the vague idea of extending his evening ramble, turned northward. Unconsciously he kept repeating Flynt's words: "The death of Lord Russell or your own." Then, without heed to where he was going, he fell into a reverie in which he saw the emptiness and uselessness of his life.

Presently he entered a large square, and found himself asking what was so familiar in the picket fence and broad flight of steps that led up to the main entrance of the mansion on the corner. A wing of the house made out into a side street and presented three brilliantly-lighted windows to the night. Two were empty, but on the white shade of the third only a few feet above the sidewalk was fixed the sharp shadow of a man's head bending over a table. Now and then the lips moved as if their owner were addressing some other occupant of the chamber. It was the head of an old man, bald and shrunken.

Mortmain uttered a short curse. What tricks was Fate trying to play with him by leading his footsteps to the house of the very man who on the following morning would ruin him as inevitably and inexorably as the sun would rise! A wave of anger surged through him and he shook his fist at the shadow on the curtain, exclaiming as he had done in his study half an hour before: "Curse him!"

"Ain't got much bloomin' 'air, 'as 'e, guv'nor?" said a thick voice at his elbow.

Sir Richard started back and beheld by the indistinct light of the street lamp the leering face of Flaggs, the clerk.

"Tha'sh yer frien' Russell," continued the other with easy familiarity. "A bloomin' bad un, says I. 'Orrid li'l bald 'ead! Got'sh notes, too. *Your* notes, Sir Richard. Don't like 'im myself!"

Mortmain turned faint. This wretched scrivener had stumbled upon or overheard his secret. That he was drunk was obvious, but that only made him the more dangerous.

"Take yourself off, my man. It's too cold out here for you," ordered the baronet, slipping a couple of shillings into his hand.

"Than' you, Sir Richard," mumbled Flaggs, leaning heavily in Mortmain's direction. "I accept this as a 'refresher.' Lemme tell you somethin'. 'Like to kill 'im,' says you? Kill 'im, says I. Le's kill 'im together. 'Ere an' now! Eh?"

"Leave me, do you hear?" cried the baronet. "You're in no condition to be on the street."

Flaggs grinned a sickly grin.

"Same errand as you, your worship. Both 'ere lookin' at li'l old bald 'ead. Look at 'im now——"

He raised his finger and pointed at the window, then staggered backward, lost his balance, and fell over the curb along the gutter. In another instant a policeman had him by the collar and had jerked him to his feet. The fall had so dazed the clerk that he made no resistance.

"I 'ope 'e didn't hoffer you no violence, Sir Richard," remarked the bobby, touching his helmet with his unoccupied hand. "Hit's disgraceful—right in front of Lord Russell's, too!"

"No, he was merely offensive," replied Mortmain, recognizing the policeman as an old timer on the beat. "Thank you. Good-night."

The baronet turned away as the bobby started toward the station-house conducting his bewildered victim by the nape of the neck. Without heeding direction Mortmain strode on, trying to forget the drunken Flaggs and the little bald head in the window. The clerk's words had created in him a feeling of actual nausea, so that a perspiration broke out all over his body and he walked uncertainly. After covering half a mile or so, the air revived him, and, having taken his bearings, he made a wide circle so as to avoid Farringham Square again and at the same time to approach his house from the opposite direction in which he had started. He still felt shocked and ill—the same sensation which he had once experienced on seeing two navvies fighting outside of a music hall. He remembered afterward that there seemed to be more people on the streets as he neared his home and that a patrol wagon passed at a galop in the same direction. A hundred yards farther on he saw a long envelope lying in the slush upon the sidewalk and mechanically he picked it up and thrust it in the pocket of his coat. Joyce came to the door just as the hall clock boomed seven. Sir Richard had been gone exactly an hour.

"Fetch me a brandy and soda," ordered the baronet huskily and stepped into the study without removing his furs. The fire had been replenished and was cracking merrily, but it sent no answering glow through Sir Richard's frame. The shadow of the little bald head still rested like a weight upon his brain, and his hands were moist and clammy. He thrust them into his pockets and came into contact with the wet manila cover of the envelope, and he drew it forth and tossed it upon the table just as Joyce entered with the brandy.

The valet removed his master's coat and noiselessly left the room, while Mortmain drained the glass and then carelessly examined the envelope. The names of "Flynt, Steele & Burnham" printed in the upper left-hand corner caught his eye. The names of his own solicitors! That was a peculiar thing. Perhaps Flynt had dropped it—or Flaggs. He turned it over curiously. It was unsealed as if it had formed one of a package of papers. The baronet lifted the envelope to the lamp and peeped within it. There were three thin sheets of paper covered with writing, and unconsciously he drew them forth and examined them. At the foot of each in delicate, firm characters appeared his own name staring him familiarly in the face. In the corner were the unmistakable figures £25,000. He rubbed his forehead and read all three carefully. There could be no doubt of it—they were his own three notes of hand to Lord Gordon Russell. Fate was playing tricks with him again.

'A fire from Heaven to consume the notes," Flynt had said. Here were the notes—there was the fire. Had Heaven perhaps really interposed to save him! Was this chance or Providence? With a short breath the baronet grasped the notes and took a step toward the hearth. As he did so the extension telephone by the mantel began to ring excitedly. His heart thumped loudly as, with a feeling of guilt, he relaid the notes upon the table and seized the telephone.

"Yes—yes—this is Mortmain!"

"Richard," came the voice of a friend at the club in anxious tones, "are you there? Are you at home?"

"Yes—yes!" repeated the baronet breathlessly. "What is it?"

"Have you heard the news—the news about Lord Russell?"

Mortmain's head swam with a whirl of premonition.

"No," he replied, trying to master himself, while the perspiration again broke out over his body. "What news? What has happened?"

"Lord Russell was murdered in his library at half-after six this evening. Some one gained access to the room and killed the old man at his study table."

"Killed Lord Russell!" gasped Sir Richard. "Have they caught the murderer?"

"No," continued his friend. "The assassin escaped by one of the windows into the street. The police have taken possession. There is nothing to indicate who did the deed. There was blood everywhere. His secretary, a man named

(Continued on Page [illegible])

THE FIRE-EATERS

"Gentlemen's Battles" Under the Code of Honor

BY JOHN S. WISE

SOMETIMES, when I sit and reflect on the views of substantially everybody nowadays upon certain subjects, and contrast them with those prevailing when I was a child, I wonder whether it is really the same world I lived in fifty years ago.

A half-century has sufficed to effect a complete revolution in public sentiment upon many questions pertaining to the social life of Americans. Take, for example, the subject of attendance upon divine worship. When I was a child the failure of the head of the family to attend religious worship on the Sabbath day raised the presumption that there was something wrong in his mental or moral make-up. This observance was as much a part of the habit of a gentleman as that of shaving and changing his linen daily.

Then, too, blasphemy, scoffing or speaking irreverently of religious things was sufficient to expel any man from good society. Profanity was, perhaps, more prevalent then than it is to-day, but a distinction between profanity and blasphemy was not only drawn with care but carefully observed. One may call it a distinction without a difference, but it was nevertheless observed with nicety.

Swearing was a princely habit; blasphemy was only indulged in by heretics and vulgarians. Queen Elizabeth herself indulged in all sorts of oaths, as is testified by her language to her favorites, Leicester, Raleigh and others. With such a distinguished example, it is no wonder that "our army swore terribly in Flanders."

The practice of profanity was at its height among the English soldiers who were battling for religious liberty in the Low Countries about the time Jamestown was settled, and the habit was unquestionably transplanted to Virginia, where it appears to have thrived, for even the good and great George Washington is reported to have expressed himself most forcibly at Monmouth, and I have often heard my father tell a very good story, told to him by one of the Carys, of a certain Sunday when in his youth he was visiting at Mount Vernon. Of course, everybody went to church, and young Cary was allowed to ride a favorite mare of General Washington's. On the way home the mare ran away with Cary. As he dashed by the Washington coach, the General, who thought it was a boyish freak, stuck his head out of the window and cursed him furiously as long as he was within hearing.

Drinking was another of our inherited accomplishments, and that was not confined to the English colonists. It appears to have been as much a Dutch as an English accomplishment, and perhaps it has retained more of its vigor in the Dutch colony of New York than anywhere else at the present day.

The particular accomplishment of which I purpose to speak is that of dueling, which was more prevalent in the Southern colonies than in any other section of the United States. This practice had a distinct origin in the days of chivalry and was not confined to any European country. In Germany, France, Spain, England, and even in the plebeian Netherlands during the so-called days of chivalry, what was known as the wager of battle was so well recognized that even a person charged with a social offense, but incapacitated by sex or condition from bearing arms, had the right recognized in courts of justice to call for and accept a champion to engage in mortal combat in defense of the accused under rules prescribed by the court. The triumph or defeat of the champion so elected determined the question of guilt or innocence.

Education in the law of single combat was an essential part of the training of every youth whose rank entitled him to wear coat armor. It is hard to realize that it is but a little over three hundred years since Henry of Navarre made formal proffer to settle the rival claims of himself and Henry, Duke of Guise, to the French succession by single combat.

It is not difficult to perceive, with such precedents, how the custom of settling disputes, by what was called private battle, became, as it were, hereditary among gentlemen, and continued long after the use of armor had ceased.

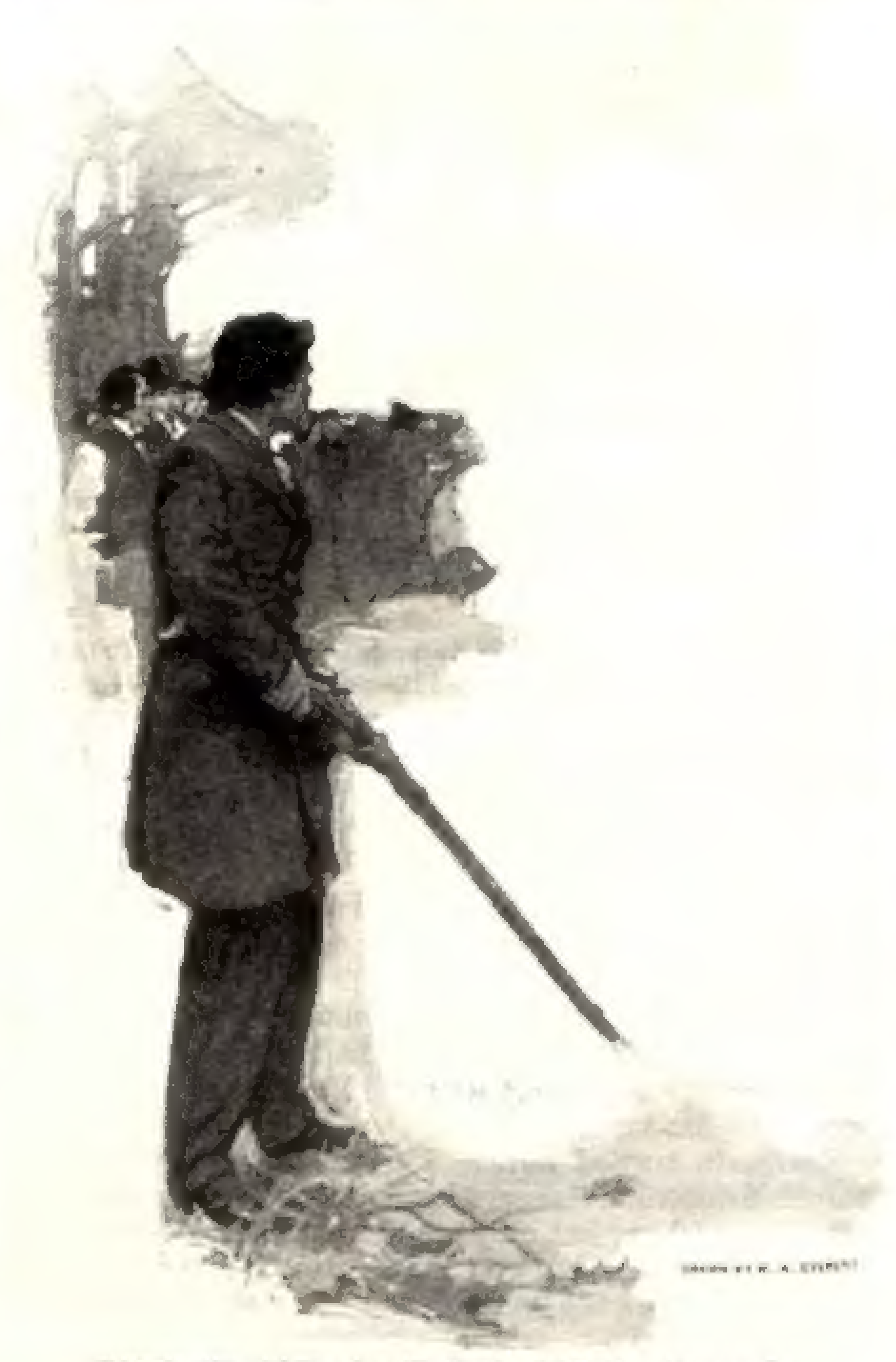
In my boyhood and up to within twenty years ago not only did the practice of dueling survive in the South, but it was believed in by a number of people, who, on the whole, were just as respectable and just as sensible as people anywhere else. The times have changed greatly and we have changed with them.

Nowadays attendance on public worship by men has fallen away until anybody looking into a church may almost fancy that only women regard attendance upon divine worship as essential to salvation. Views upon the subject of the Divinity and salvation, no matter how blasphemous or skeptical they may be, are regarded simply as venial idiosyncrasies of the individual; profanity is frowned upon and denounced as evidence of low association.

The men of our day have undoubtedly greatly improved in the matter of drinking. Old-time drunkenness is rare in the country, and although in large cities there is a great deal of drinking done, it is certainly injurious to the standing in business life of those indulging in it.

Dueling has so passed out of vogue that any man anywhere who would fight a duel at the present time is looked upon as little better than a sentimental lunatic.

It is concerning this last extinct practice that I purpose to give some reminiscences. The reader must pardon the introduction of the members of my own family. It is not through egotism, but because all my reminiscences were derived from their experiences, and for the further reason that, in order to put myself in touch with those who care to read these reminiscences, I must put them in the atmosphere by which my own youth was surrounded and under the influence of which I accepted doctrines expounded to me by two of the best men I ever knew; doctrines which, at the present day, seem absurd to everybody.



"At the Word 'Fire,' as He Pushed His Gun Forward, it was Discharged into the Ground Not Three Feet from His Toes"

My father was not only one of the bravest and most eloquent men I ever knew, but he had the most infallible instinct of honesty, practiced it with Roman fortitude, and was one of the best husbands, fathers and masters that ever lived. I believe this will be the universal testimony of the great number of people who knew him. He was born in 1806 and, being an orphan, much of his youth was spent in the home of his grandfather, of whom Mr. Custis in his memoirs says: "General Cropper had but one toast which he delivered in all companies, to wit, 'God bless George Washington!'"

The family were Episcopalians, and, although my father never joined the church publicly, he was reared to a profound reverence for holy things, carefully and thoroughly versed in the Bible, attended Episcopal service regularly and required his family to do so; treated trifling with sacred things as evidence of degeneracy; was scrupulously abstemious about liquor; refrained from gambling as a matter of principle, and was true to every family relation. But he swore with almost poetic fluency, as his old grandfather did before him, and he was a disciple of the code of dueling. His advocacy of dueling could not be put upon the score of ignorance, for he was an unusually intelligent and educated man. Moreover, he was a man so courageous and independent that he often defied public opinion concerning things about which he had his own convictions. If he had, for a moment, believed that dueling was wrong, he would have refused to fight, and would have been utterly indifferent to any aspersion coming from anybody who doubted his motives. But concerning a fairly-conducted duel it would have been the veriest folly to argue with him that it was wrong. He believed that it was the only practical method of maintaining in a community of gentlemen the courtesy and deference and mutual consideration which was essential to such society. He believed it was the way of adjusting differences which were irreconcilable between gentlemen, and looked upon fist-fights and bowie-knife encounters as the practices of vulgarians who were little better than animals.

It was idle to talk with him about the consequences of dueling—the death or wounds of the principals, the vicarious sufferings entailed upon their families in consequence. To all such suggestions he would reply that in urging these you were sacrificing a high principle to the arguments of inconvenience; that of course dueling was dangerous, and that if it was not it would not make men cautions about provoking a duel. He argued that its very danger was its strength, because it tended to preserve social courtesy, and that, when its utility was admitted and one began to calculate the cost, he was rapidly falling into the category of a Bob Acres and becoming a coward.

He delighted to tell the story of the interview between Felix Grundy and Andrew Jackson. Grundy consulted Jackson and sought his advice whether, in a certain matter, he ought to send a man a challenge. After hearing the case, Old Hickory thundered forth: "By the eternal gods, sir, challenge him!" Grundy began to explain to General Jackson the condition of his private affairs, which made it very undesirable that he should challenge. Jackson indignantly replied: "Then, sir, if your family affairs are more important than your honor, don't challenge him."

The moral aspect of dueling did not seem to repel him at all. In fact, he looked upon the sending or accepting of a challenge to fight a duel as entirely consistent with loving and serving and fearing God in other respects. The mental and moral absolution taken to himself by the duelist of that day would seem to have rested upon the notion that the right to demand respect and courtesy with absolute fearlessness, and to kill anybody who denied those inherent

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Editor's Note—This is the first of two papers by Mr. Wise on some famous American duels.

rights, was God-given, and that the enforcement of those rights was not offensive to the Deity. I have not the slightest idea that he thought God would punish him for the offense of dueling. Many years after his own dueling experiences I witnessed his death, and it was sublime, God-fearing and conscience-clear. His participation in duels apparently gave him not the slightest concern for his future happiness, and there is the puzzle of it, for he was neither a fool nor a hypocrite.

At the very beginning of his political career my father fought a duel with the Honorable Richard Coke. Mr. Coke represented the First Congressional District of Virginia and was a Nullifier. My father announced his independent candidacy, and in opposition to Coke's views. He was then only about twenty-five years old. Coke was a popular man, and it looked like another David and Goliath fight. It was not long before a challenge passed, and, in the vernacular of the day, Mr. Coke was "winged." That is to say, he was wounded and disabled by a ball in his pistol-arm.

Did it injure my father's prospects? Not much! The community voted it a fair fight, and although the good religious women, then as now, rolled up their eyes and shuddered and denounced the sin of such conflicts, the men thought my father had served Coke right and elected him over Coke. Coke did not seem to think so badly of it, for he and my father were reconciled. Coke accepted his defeat gracefully, never opposed my father again, and the two were friendly ever afterward.

In Congress my father became much attached to Sargent S. Prentiss, that brilliant Yankee, who went South and out-Heroded all the great Herods in his wild, Southern ways. I have often heard my father laugh over Prentiss' description of his duel with Foote in Mississippi.

In those days a duel was a delightful diversion to a Mississippi community. The whole town turned out to witness it. On the occasion described a number of little boys had climbed the neighboring trees that they might better witness the shooting.

"Little boys, you had better get down from there," said Prentiss, as he walked to his position with a laughing face. "Mr. Foote is very careless in his use of firearms."

Another favorite story illustrating the coolness of combatants on the field was that of the duel between Henry Clay and John Randolph, in which, after exchanging shots and being reconciled, Mr. Randolph, in his thin, piping voice, pointed to a furrow in his clothing made by Mr. Clay's bullet and said:

"Mr. Clay, you owe me a new coat."

The most serious of my father's experiences in dueling was that in the famous Graves and Cilley duel, into which he was dragged, against his will, to act as second for a man he knew but slightly and for whom he really cared nothing.

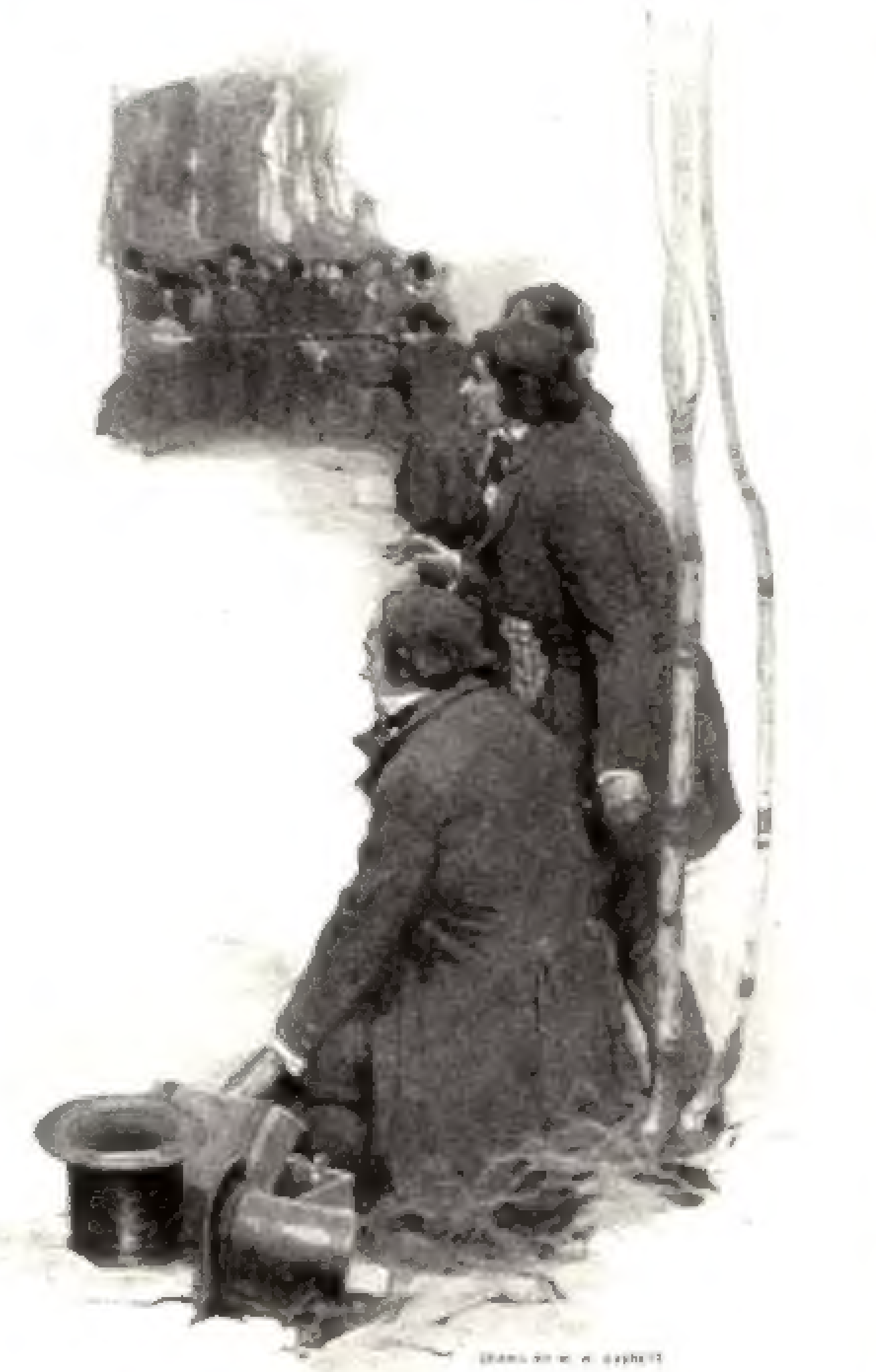
The Honorable Jonathan Cilley, a gallant, impetuous, high-tempered man, entered Congress from Maine with the oft-avowed feeling that the members of Congress from the North allowed the Southern members to hector and lord it over them too freely—that they ought to respond to such attacks in kind, and that, when they had done so a few times, such arrogance would cease.

Cilley was said to be a capital shot himself and it was not long before he found the fight he was looking for. Unfortunately, the adversary whom he aroused to challenge him was a Northern man, James Watson Webb, editor of a Whig newspaper in New York named the Courier and Enquirer. Cilley had denounced him for his zeal in the Whig-Clay cause. Webb appealed to Representative Graves, of Kentucky, to bear his challenge, and Graves, being a devoted follower of Mr. Clay, in whose service Webb had been attacked, consented.

The following account of my father's connection with the affair is copied from an original manuscript drawn up by him and, as late as 1875, submitted to and approved by his lifelong friend, the Honorable George W. Jones, of Iowa, who was Mr. Cilley's second. It is valuable because it has never before been published, and is instructive because it shows some of the points of finesse in the science of dueling. It is not published in full because of sundry strictures upon James Watson Webb, which would only tend to revive bitterness:

"According to my recollection I was not at Washington, but at home in Accomac, Virginia, when the speech of Cilley was made and published. I returned to Washington after the time when Webb engaged Mr. Graves' services as a second and put the challenge into Graves' hands, and he, Graves, had delivered it. At no time did I ever confer with Webb about the matter, either alone or with Mr. Graves, or others. He knew nothing of my advice or counsel to Mr. Graves.

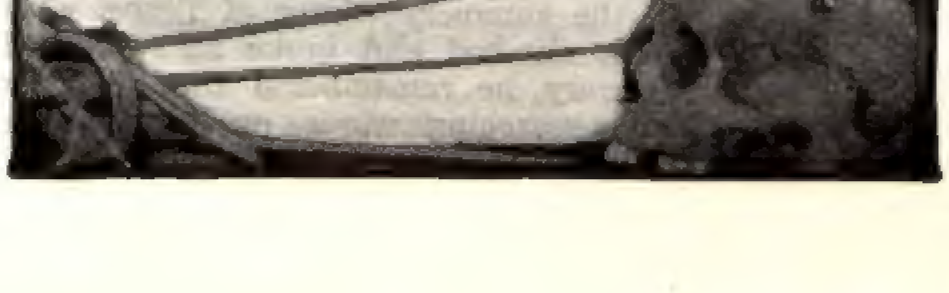
"But whether I had returned to Washington or not, I positively aver that the challenge was delivered to Graves and by him delivered to Cilley, without any knowledge or information of the fact on my part. It was only after the challenge was tendered that I was informed by Mr. Graves or any one else of its existence. I learned from Mr. Graves himself, who sought my counsel, all I ever knew, or was informed of before the fight, of what occurred between him, Graves, and Mr. Cilley on the presentation of the challenge. Mr. Graves' statement to me was in brief and in substance as follows: He said, as soon as he obtained a private interview with Mr. Cilley, he announced the object of his visit. He (Mr. Cilley) showed no surprise and seemed to be prepared for the call. He immediately declined to accept the challenge, on the sole ground that he would *not admit his responsibility for words spoken by him in debate in the House.* Mr. Graves asked him to say whether he declined on the ground that his principal, James Watson Webb, was not a gentleman. Mr. Cilley replied that he would not affirm or disclaim any reason other than that he was not responsible for words spoken by him in debate in the House. Mr. Graves then inquired whether that was his only ground of declining. Mr. Cilley replied that the only ground he chose to stand upon was his irresponsibility to an editor for words spoken in debate in the House. Mr. Graves asked him whether that meant to disclaim any other ground. Mr. Cilley repeated that he meant not to affirm or disclaim any other ground.



"At the Count 'Two,' or a Moment Before, Mr. Cilley Fired"

"Mr. Graves informed me that, upon this, he reported to his principal that Mr. Cilley *did not put* his refusal to accept on the ground that James Watson Webb was not a gentleman, but upon the sole ground stated. My advice to him was that the reason expressed was sufficient, but some one else advised (whom I am not and never was informed) that he ought to require Mr. Cilley to put his reason for declining in writing. I told him that was regular and proper, but advised him to the preferable course to report his own statement and submit it to Mr. Cilley for affirmance or contradiction: that as Mr. Cilley put his declining on the ground solely of irresponsibility, he was justifiable in saying that *he did not* put it on the ground of Webb's character or any other ground, and that he had no right to demand of him a disclaimer of any other ground. Upon this Mr. Graves drew a paper in substance, reciting his statement, and adding that, upon that, he had reported and would publish, if necessary, that Mr. Cilley had not declined on the ground that Webb was not a gentleman. What he did with that paper I am not and never was informed; but he returned it to me saying that he could not prevail on Mr. Cilley to affirm or to deny his statement, or to put his only reason assigned for declining in writing.

"I told him neither was necessary, as he had only to make and publish his statement that Mr. Cilley did not put himself on the ground that Webb was not a gentleman, and leave the latter to acquiesce in or contradict his statement. If he acquiesced in it, well; if not, it would raise an issue of veracity between him and Mr. Cilley, and I was sure that Mr. Cilley would disclaim any impeachment of his, Graves', veracity, whilst he could easily explain any reservation of his right to express any other reason but the one assigned. Mr. Graves had in fact drawn a challenge on the ground that Mr. Cilley's course impliedly, at least, impeached his veracity, but after conference with me alone he asked me to meet him at Mr. Clay's room early in the evening.



"After tea, I called with Mr. Graves on Mr. Clay, and already assembled there were Mr. Clay, Mr. John J. Crittenden and Mr. Richard Menefee. They were all consulted. Mr. Graves handed to Mr. Clay the challenge he had written. Mr. Clay said immediately that the call was not based on the true issues. Mr. Cilley had refused to disclaim personal exceptions to Webb and by the Code of Dueling Graves was bound to demand such disclaimer, or stand in the shoes of his principal. He cast aside the challenge drawn by Graves, and *with his own hand and pen* drew the challenge which was handed to Mr. Cilley. I immediately objected to the form drawn by Mr. Clay, for the reason that it put the call upon a *punctilio* which never could be and never was settled without blood; that if Mr. Graves put his call on the point of his own veracity, Mr. Cilley had but to disclaim that, and I was sure he would, and that would end Graves' interposition in the affair. Mr. Crittenden and Mr. Menefee sided with Mr. Clay. Mr. Graves immediately copied the paper written by Mr. Clay, *the original of which I kept*, and Mr. Graves destroyed the form of challenge written by himself.

"I then declined to bear the note drawn by Mr. Clay for reason of my stated objection. It left no room for adjustment or explanation and the meeting would necessarily be fatal. Messrs. Clay, Crittenden and Menefee all three protested with me for declining to act as second; and I persisted until Mr. Graves with great feeling rose erect on his feet from his chair, and said: 'Mr. Wise, can you expect me to be governed by your counsel alone against that of both the Senators of my State and colleague in the House of Representatives, Mr. Menefee, after a full hearing of your objections to the ground of challenge, and after they have been overruled by older heads than your own? If you do,' he continued, with his finger pointed to me, 'I call these colleagues to remember that when you were absent from your seat in the House, and from the city of Washington, I took up your defense against an attack upon you by Mr. Cilley and was ready to stand in your place to meet any and all responsibility for you. And now I here say to you that I have more confidence in your skill as second than I have in any other person; and if you will not serve me and I am brought dead or wounded from the field, I call these gentlemen to witness that I shall attribute any disaster to me to the want or absence of your skill and experience.'

"I was touched deeply by this appeal and said at once with emotion: 'Mr. Graves, if you put your request to act for you on that ground, I am left no election. I will carry the challenge.'

"I did so the next morning, and was careful to keep Mr. Clay's *autograph original*—and it was well I did so, as after events proved. You promptly brought the acceptance by Mr. Cilley and the terms of the duel to me at my room. I was alone, with my case of new English nine-inch dueling-pistols open, examining their order and condition. You quietly tapped at my door. I answered, 'Come in,' and I can see your honest old face now, as you entered brusquely, saying: 'Ha! You'll have no use for them.' You looked at the pistols and then handed me the acceptance and terms. I reserved any reply then, and after a little chat about the rifle as a lawful weapon and my ignorance where to procure a reliable one, you retired.

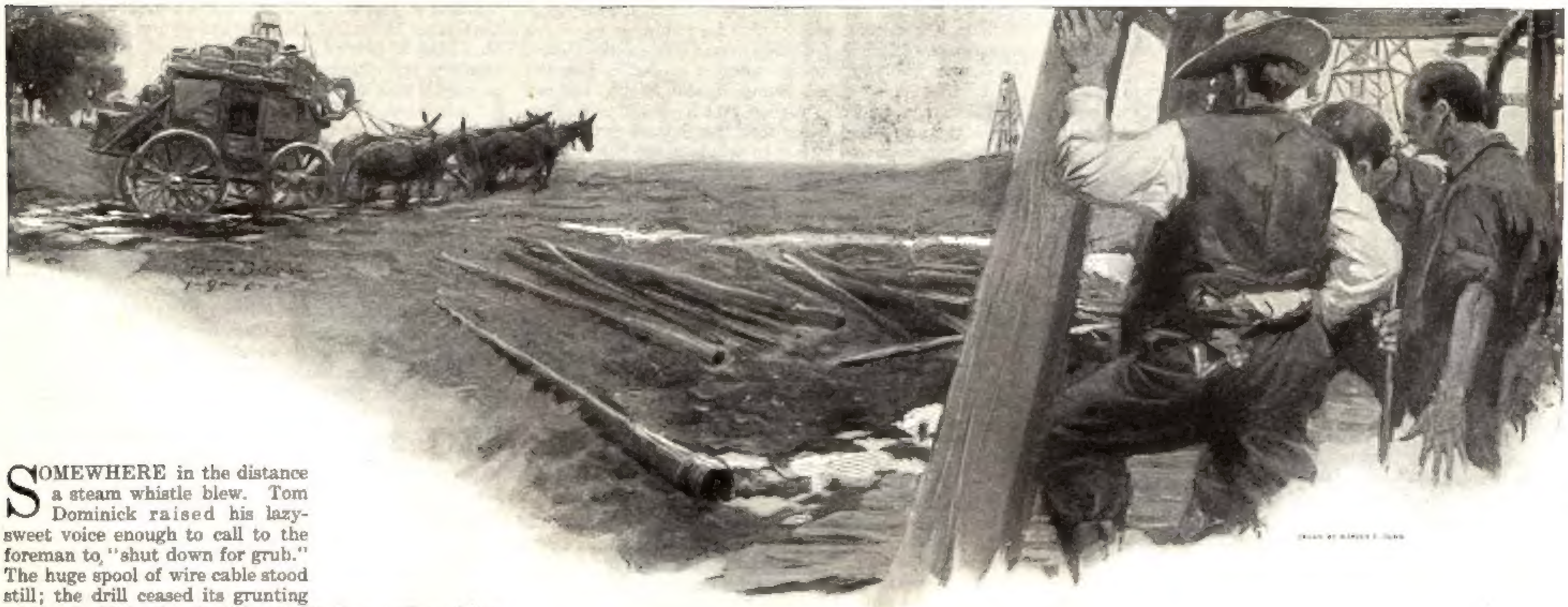
"I sought Mr. Graves and told him that I should object to the rifle. He again took me to Mr. Clay. At once Mr. Clay said: 'He is a Kentuckian and can never back from a rifle.'

"That question settled, I then sought delay; went to Dawson's, and informed you that I required time to procure the proper rifle. The fact is, I tried every expedient of objection and delay to avoid the duel, hoping that a little time gained would cause a mediation of some sort, or an arrest through Webb. That hope was ended by your generous assistance to procure a weapon. After a rifle and every appurtenance was tendered and laid on my table, I could delay no longer. I could not reveal to you my motive to take time for procuring a weapon, and you made the mistake of supposing I really needed assistance to procure one, and ingenuously tendered one, which compelled me at once to obtain the best rifle in the city.

"What occurred afterward, on the field and elsewhere, our joint and several statements made immediately after the duel show. But there was one subject of reproach to you and myself, which neither could explain without damaging our principals. Mr. Graves had three seconds, Mr. Crittenden, Mr. Menefee and myself; and Mr. Cilley had two advisory seconds, Mr. Duncan and Mr. Bynum, besides yourself. Now, no step was taken by me without consultation and agreement with Messrs. Crittenden and

(Concluded on Page 28)

Where Life is Marked Down



Mabel's Choice of Cowards

BY RUPERT HUGHES

SOMEWHERE in the distance a steam whistle blew. Tom Dominick raised his lazy-sweet voice enough to call to the foreman to, "shut down for grub." The huge spool of wire cable stood still; the drill ceased its grunting whirl; the high pine derrick quit its long yellow shiver.

Then Tom, and "the Prince," and Jo, and the fireman wiped some of the black oil from their hands with bunches of greasy cotton waste; the finishing touches they made on the sides of their overalls. They rubbed the slime from their high-laced boots on patches of grass, and were off under the pines to the boarding-house, a quarter of a mile away.

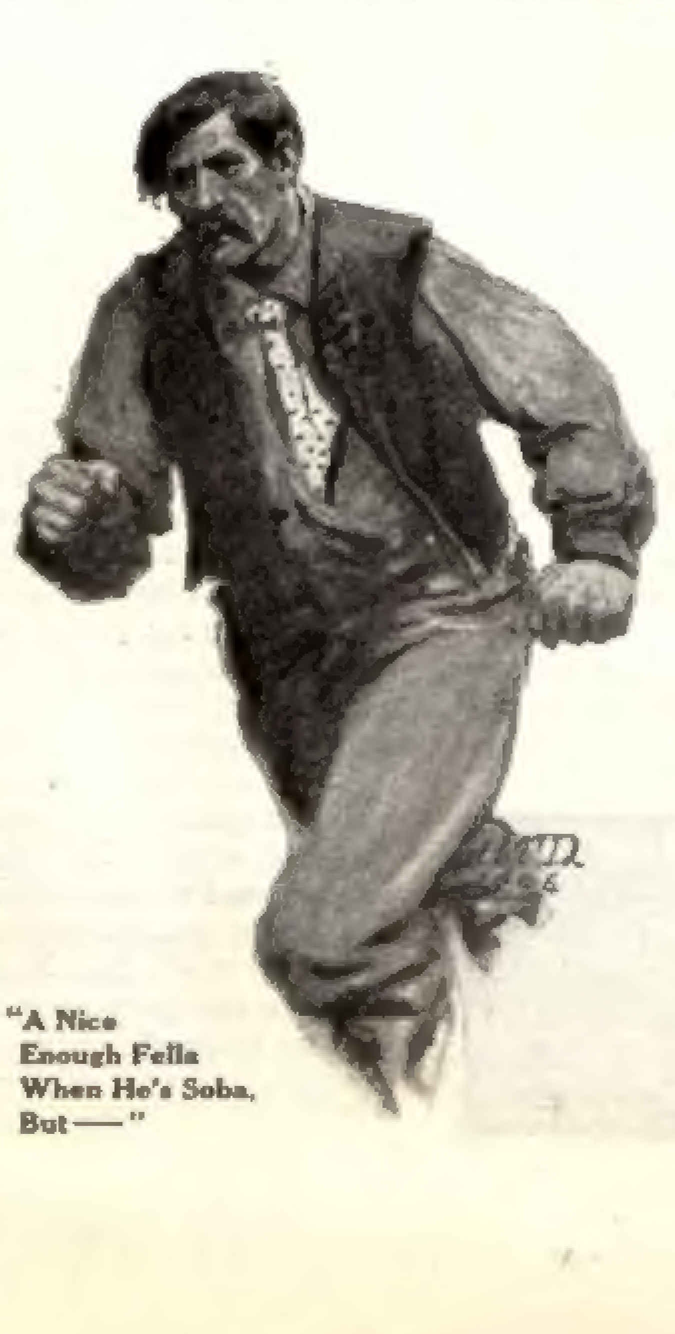
They had not gone far when they met Banty Jones, who had been sent to a repair shop to get a broken "elevator" mended. He was toting it with some difficulty and needed no urging to drop the heavy iron spider on the ground and adjourn for dinner.

He gave the others no more than a look, but he laid a cordial hand on the shoulder of the Prince. It made the Prince uneasy, for something had risen to trouble the old friendship with Bant—a friendship that was the wonder of the oil-field, since Bant was admitted to be the toughest nut that ever fell from a hickory-tree, whereas the Prince—well, they called him "the Prince." No one would ever have called Bant Jones by such a name. At his best he was rather tolerated than liked by the other men—except, of course, the Prince. Bant, sober, was lacking in most of the graces. But Bant, drunk! When Bant was in liquor he was ugly as a bronco with hydrophobia; his language was slime from the slush-pit; his temper spread and caught fire like the gas in a blow-off.

Almost everything is forgiven to whisky; but there is a limit even to its prerogatives. A dozen times Bant had close shaves from being killed outright by the men he insulted in some peculiarly odious fashion. There is just one small and highly unpopular animal that Banty drunk could be likened to. So when Bant was under the weather they called him by that name. And yet it was Banty Jones whom Bill Abbott had accepted as his best friend, and it was Banty Jones that gave the name of Prince to the young-eyed stranger from the far North, who had known a home on a quiet farm in Ohio.

It was strange that Abbott should have drifted to this ragged edge of civilization. But, however he arrived, he brought an aroma of good places, firm principles and gentle ideas into a region where the acrid smell of crude oil and the sharp stink of its gas pervaded the very brains of the fortune-hunters.

There was little thought here but immediate money and the immediate spending of it. They were gambling for life, for wealth, staking everything on what should come out of the big grab-bag a thousand feet or more under the turf. The churning drill might bring up at any moment a great fortune in a roaring black geyser of oil, or a quick death in a wild release of screaming gas; or, worst of all, it might bring up nothing but the proof of another bad guess. With their eyes eternally fastened on a drill that twirled like a roulette wheel, even the men who had nothing at stake, the day-laborers on the crews, lived under the spell and control of luck, and knew the pangs if not the profits of high play. They were like the employees in a great gambling-house.



"A Nice Enough Fella When He's Soba, But —"

But the Prince had seemed immune to the disease of the trade. He had never acquired an important thirst, and it gave him no pleasure to drink his own legs out from under him. No more did card-play entice him. He was a good loser, but he looked sad when he quit winner, and always tried to pay back what he had gained. Which caused much surprise and some indignation.

And then the Prince's language was a bit more elegant than that of the other men. It was not that he was in any sense highly educated, but that he had either learned more or forgotten less than the others in the scant time fortune had allotted them all at school. The Abbott boy could not help being an influence in a still, small way. As Banty Jones once put it:

"Hearin' that kid talk, out heah amongst this gang of pirates, is like hearin' the band at a dance-hall strike up 'Home, Sweet Home,' all of a suddent."

It hurt the Prince, at first, to work on Sundays, but he was forced to it. Gamblers, like generals, cannot put off their game till Monday. Then the possession of twenty-one dollars at the end of his first week as an unskilled helper was still more unsettling to the Prince. He felt like an American millionaire in an Italian village. He threw coin about lavishly, treating everybody to everything that was for sale in the pine-box shops of the field-town.

But soon he learned that the big wages were, as usual, confronted with big expenses; so he reverted to the cautiousness of his early training. Much of his money went North—tucked in letters urging his mother to buy her a new calico for herself, or a new suit of store-clo'es for paw, or brass-toed shoes for the youngsters. Even in the summery winter of Texas, where roses climbed and broke into bloom in January, he remembered that, in Ohio, spine-searching winds prowled between the farmhouse and the school.

And yet the Abbott boy always had ready cash. If a man on another rig got burned or crushed, the subscription list always caught Abbott's name for as large a sum as the best. His own crew or his acquaintances at the boarding-house could always borrow of him.

Nobody knew that better than Banty Jones. And he knew it from experience. He always "borrowed," and hardly ever returned—except that, sometimes on a Tuesday, he would come to the Prince and nobly pay in a dollar, to save his face when he knew he was going to need five on a Wednesday.

Though the Prince did not care for cards or the wheel, he was always paying Banty Jones' losses. But he never gave advice with his loans. He laughed a little, and that was all. Bant seemed almost never to win. The boys comforted him with the proverb: "Onlucky at cyards is sho' lucky at love." He had, indeed, cut out everybody else in the field in winning the attention of the daughter of Mrs. Glenny, who kept the only two-story boarding-house in the field.

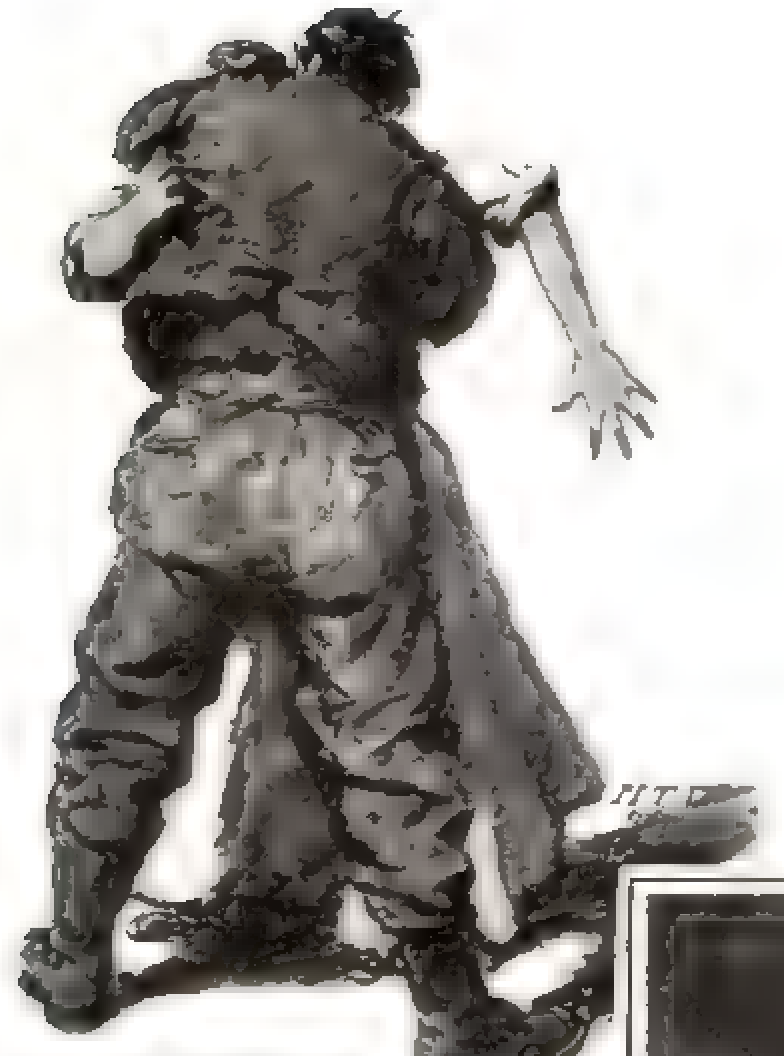
Miss Mabel Glenny would have been counted plain on the handsome streets of any of the cities of Texas; but she was easily the best-looking among the few white women in the field-town. Her eyes were shiny; her teeth in good repair; her hair stayed in its pins; and she had a plumpness and a pinkness about her that were highly disturbing to the mob of bachelors. Beauty is, after all, a relative quality, and Phryne was no more effective among the fair women of Athens than Mabel was in the oil-field town.

But Bant was not handsome even here. And yet, as often happens, though the men could not see him at all, he had a way with the women. He could say things that would bring the blush-roses to their cheeks and make them snicker. And sometimes they would reach over and pat him, with an "Aw, you go on, Mr. Jones!" that made the other men green with envy.

Bant felt so certain of his preëminence as a lady-allurer that he dared to make the Prince join his boarding-crew. He introduced him with a flourish as "the whitest white man that ever worked a bailer," and he used to sit with Mabel in the gloaming on Mrs. Glenny's front porch and talk of little else but the Prince's virtues. And so what was bound to happen happened. Miss Glenny began to believe all that Bant told her, and to look for herself. She stared at the Prince till he could hardly eat, and went into hot flashes every time he met her encouraging eyes.

It just happened that at this very time Bant began a series of evening trips to the nearest city, where gambling was easier. So the deserted Ariadne invited the Prince to share the bench on the porch. And then the trouble began—very softly and sweetly, as trouble usually begins.

The Texan moon, those nights, was so dazzling that it turned even the shacks and tents into little lamp-lit homes,



Just Grabbed Her and Hugged Her Till She Squealed

the derricks into tall spires of beauty, and the mud-wallow roads and oil-streaked fields into a floor of porphyry. Just about this time, too, the Prince had begun to mope for Ohio, and the pretty girls he had known there. He had begun to think of sociables and straw-rides, of starry lanes after prayer-meeting, or of sunbonneted apple-cheeks driving cows home and calling, "Hello, you!" in a way that sounded pleasant along toward supper-time.

And here he was in the mischief-making tropical moonlight, close beside a pretty girl whose shadowy arm kept brushing his, who would emphasize her phrases by tapping his hard hand with her soft fingers, and who delighted in telling the Prince how fine everybody thought he was, including maw, and how kind of lonesome it must be living alone the way he done, and still it wasn't no worse for a man living by hisself than for a girl—and—but—after all such was life.

The charm of the least ugly woman in the neighborhood was working its ancient way. Fate is Proximity, and the ingenuous lad was undergoing all the torments that loneliness, fascination, and a virulent conscience could conspire to inflict. He knew that Bant had staked out a prior claim on Miss Glenny's heart. And yet Bant had done likewise with all of the unattached women in the region. Besides, Bant had gone away and left the claim deserted. And how could a man refuse when a girl insisted on his sitting on the porch with her?

Finally, he found in himself the courage to demand of Mabel why, if she loved Banty Jones, she was so nice to another fellow. Miss Glenny laughed:

"What? Me love Banty Jo-ones? A trashy scrub like him! Well, I reckon hahdly. He's no mo' to me than the dust unda ma feet. A nice enough fella when he's soba, but a bawn gambla, a hopeless drinka and a puffeck fiend when he's in liquor—well, I reckon not."

Then the Prince sang Banty's praises as loyally as Bant had sung his. But Miss Glenny only laughed, and mocked. When he grew too eloquent she said:

"Ef you say one mo' wud abote that man, I declare I'll have to go in the ho'se and bid yuh good-evenin'."

And that was the end of the Prince's resources. He sat stupefied at the clear field before him, and made no effort to claim it in place of the dispossessed. But the next evening Miss Glenny turned her witcheries on him again, and he had no defense. His love for her surged up like a gusher coming in. It tore away all obstacles, all valves, checks, stoppages—it caught fire and burned with a rage that suffocated him. He could find no words. He just grabbed her and hugged her till she squealed.

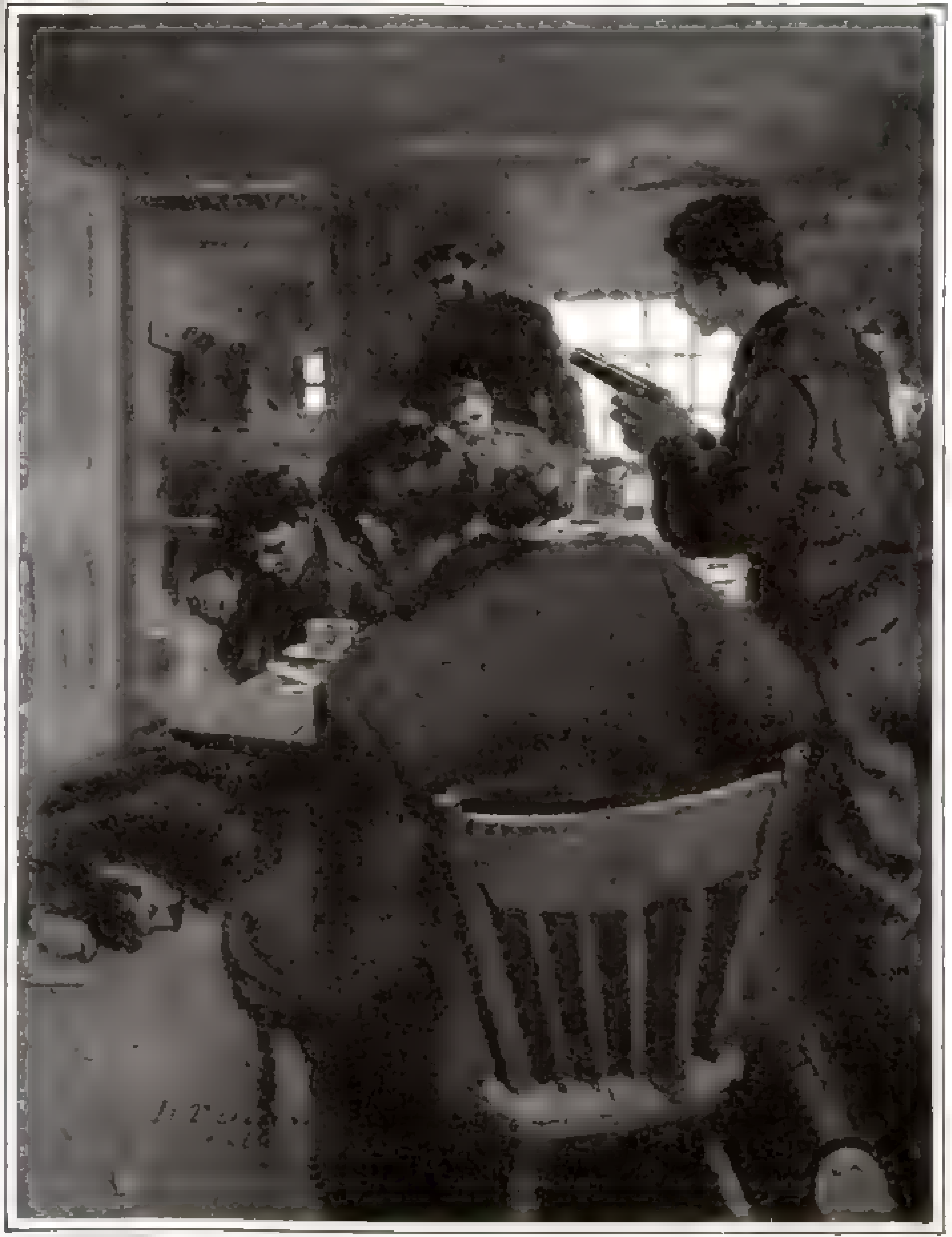
He never dreamed of taking her kisses without a promise of marriage. So they agreed to be engaged, and resolved that as soon as he could save enough they would go to the city and call upon a minister.

Strange that the very noon after the betrothal Bant should lay a cordial hand on his shoulder as they walked toward Mrs. Glenny's for dinner! The Prince felt doubly uncomfortable. In the first place, he had cut out Bant in the love-game and he could not feel quite easy about it. In the second place, Bant's manner was full of omen; it had the condescending unction of man about to negotiate a loan. And the Prince had begun to look upon his earnings in a new light, with a sort of amorous avarice.

Bant skillfully retarded their steps till Tom and the others were well in advance; then, with all the magnificence of the borrower, he told the Prince how much obliged he would be for the use of five dollars till pay-day. But the Prince said, with all the meekness of the money-lender.

"I'm terrible sorry, Bant, but I can't spare a blamed cent. I've got to begin to save now—for reasons. Fact is, I'd be mighty obliged if you could let me have a little of what's comin' to me."

Bant faded away as if he had been gassed. He had nothing to say at the table, and he did not see how outrageously Miss Glenny was slighting him for the Prince.



The Oklahoma Man Spat Contemplatively, and Murmured: "The Joke's on Bant, Boys"

That afternoon as the crew stood about the derrick, watching the everlasting eddy of the drill, and the milky gruel of water and flint-dust that flowed out of the pipe, but showed no promising smooches of oil, the conversation turned to the latest killing that had lightened the monotony of the oil-field. Suddenly the Prince blurted out a direct:

"Say, Tom, did you ever kill a man?"

Tom threw him a look more of amazement than wrath, and answered: "That's a subjeck we-all don't discuss, Prince. When a man is crowded into a corna and cain't git out except ova the daid body of a fellow-human, it's a thing he tries to forgit—leastways, while he's awake."

"Oh, excuse me, Tom," said the Prince

"Don't let that worry you, ma boy," drawled Tom, and he went on discussing the brilliant mobility with which the victor in the duel under discussion had got out his gun and emptied it before the other man had finished his declaration of war. It reminded the Prince of the Japanese navy at Port Arthur, fastening its ultimatum on the nose of a torpedo. He had never seen a shooting-scrape, or even a dead baby; and he felt the same bland academic interest in tragedy that a girl takes in the statistics of a St. Bartholomew's Day or an Antietam.

He smiled at Tom's vivid pantomime of the red moment in the saloon. It was like the third act in a melodrama. He wanted to applaud the neatness and dispatch with which the villain was put away. But he repressed his æsthetic glee, and, trying to look the Stoic, simply commented:

A man's got to be pretty quick on the draw down here in Texas, I guess."

"Quick on the draw-aw?" grunted Tom. "Well, I reckon nah-ut!"

"No?"

"Be right slow on the dra-aw, ma boy, but mahty quick on the shoot—eh, Bant?"

"That's what," smiled Bant.

"Oh, I see," said the Prince; "you want to disable the other fellow first."

"Disable him?" roared Tom. "Huh! You want tew kill him."

"Whew!"

"You listen to me, ma boy," said Tom; "if you evva have a call tew la-ay a man ote daown heah, don't you leave nothin' for nobody but the undataka. Man that's just wounded'll sho' git well. And soon's he gits well he'll hunt fo' you till he finds you. Soon's he finds you he'll sho' kill you—they's nothin' to it, eh, Bant?"

"That's what," said Bant.

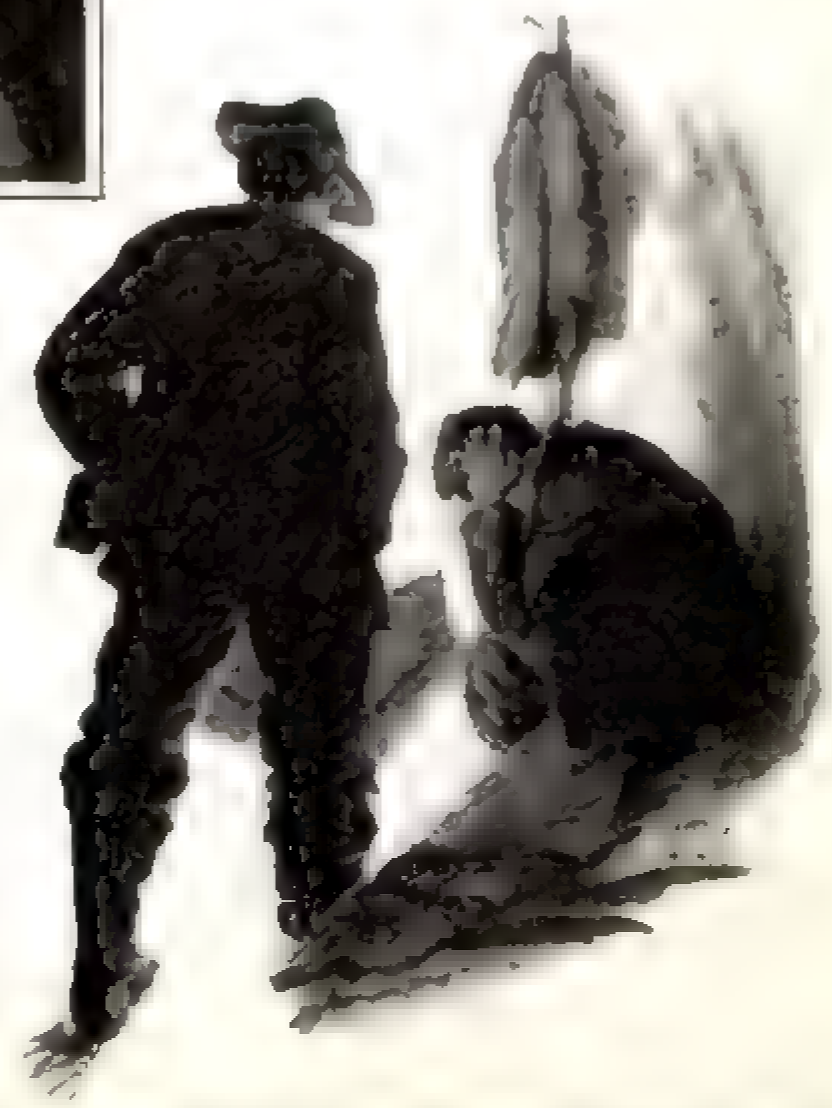
"Gee!" the Prince exclaimed. "I don't much hanker after that murder business. Up North where I come from we fight with fists, and then shake hands, an' all's peaceable again. A fellow that'd even pull a penknife on another fellow—why, nobody would speak to him."

"Well, that's up Nawth; this is daown Sothe," said Bant. But Tom felt called upon to explain the philosophy of it: "You see, Prince, we-all daown heah is said to be some polite; ouah good mannas are a sawt of byword. We don't fight much, and when we dew hit ain't fo' physical culcho'. It's a right smaht se'ious matteh with us-all fightin' is."

The Prince puffed his cold pipe hard a while, then mused aloud: "It ain't the place I'd just choose to end my days—on the end of a rope."

'Ro-ope? Huh! Ro-opes is fer niggas!" yelled Bant. "No jury ain't a-goin' to do nothin' to a man that shoots in self-defense."

'And we put a very lib'ral intuppytation on the wud 'self-defense,'" said Tom with courtlike profundity "Abote twenty-five yeahs ago, a wise and lunned Texas ju-udge 'lowed that ef a man even thought anotha man was a-goin' to draw on him, he'd as much ri-ight to shoot as if he knowed the otha fella had a gun. When a swone enemy of yone kindo' wa-aves his hand todes his hip-pocket, hit sho' ain't no time fer you to wa-ait an' see



The Contempt of a Sweetheart or the Grief of a Mother—Which Has Been the Harder for a Man to Bear, Since Time Was?

ef he's goin' to perdooce a hankychef or a bottle of perfumery. It's yo' business to unlimba an' git into action."

The Prince grew even more serious. He broke out: "Why, I've been brought up to believe it's almost better to be killed than to kill anybody!"

Tom grinned at the grinning Bant, and said: "Well, ef that's yo' pref'rence, Prince, they's plenty o' people daown heah that'll be willin' tew consult yo' idiotsinkersies. But don't git oneasy too premacho'. Most men in Texas grows gray an' dies in they beds. But we-all air aout in the oil-fiel'. The Rangehs is few an' fah apaht. Sometimes it's up to a man to be his own jedge and his own cote, and take keer o' his own seff. Most of what they call 'bad men' begun very innocent, and made their first killin' very much against their will."

"I suppose life is sort of cheap here, eh?"

"No, it hain't exackly cheap. But it's kind of marked daown, eh, Bant?"

"That's what!" said Bant. "A two-dolla' life is wuth abote one-ninety-nine in the oil business. So paste Tom's advice in yo' hat, Prince. Ef trouble comes yo' way—shoot."

Tom broke off the dispute: "And naow, Prince, s'posin' you rustle abote a bit an' bring me a joint o' thet fo'-inch pipe. We'll be needin' it right soon."

The Prince, glad to escape from so much solemnity of thought, left the derrick and hurried, by a devious, slippery, oil-smeared path, to a pile of iron pipes of various sizes and degrees of rust. He was back in a moment, face flushed and eager.

"Say, Tom, there's a puff adder about eleven yards long layin' in a neat coil on top of those pipes. Lend me your gun, will you?"

"You'll find it in the shack, in the 'hind pocket o' my good pants."

The Prince was gone, and back, with the same limber zest that marked his every movement. Bant, always glad of a gamble, sang out: "Bet you a good fi'-cent seegah you kain't hit him from heah."

"Better not; you'll lose," said the Prince. "I've been practicin' a heap."

But Bant was game, and the Prince stepped to the edge of the derrick-floor, raised the automatic .38, and, with hardly a pause for aim, let fly. There was a sharp snap; he restored the revolver to the shack, then went ploughing through the slush and greasy mud to the heap of pipe, whence he called back: "I took his head off as clean as a whistle. He's kickin' up an awful rumpus; but he don't know it. You owe me a good five-center, Bant."

"He's willin' to go right on owin' it to you, ain't you, Bant?" laughed Tom, who had known Bant to his own cost.

Bant only grunted, but the Prince said, "I'm not worryin'," and brought in the joint of pipe. When he returned Tom looked up with a twinkle in his little gray eyes.

"Thought you didn't believe in killin'. Why didn't you take yo' fist to Mista Adda?"

"It's different with snakes," said the Prince with an orthodox earnestness. "The Bible says it's our duty to kill 'em. If it wasn't for snakes we wouldn't have been evicted from Paradise."

"And ef it wasn't fer human snakes we-all'd be back in Pa'adise, 'stid o' gropin' raound fer oil daown abote the chimbley-tops of the Old Hairy," said Tom.

The next day at dinner the red-headed teamster from Oklahoma remarked that Mabel's right hand, as it passed a plate of fried catfish, was flourishing a solid gold ring with a real garnet in it. Mabel tittered and blushed and darted back into the kitchen.

Tom wanted to know what fool had gone and blew his money in on joolery for Mabel Glenny. Everybody looked at everybody else, and everybody saw that one young man was red as blazes and was putting vinegar into his bowl of milk-and-cornbread with a hand that shook like the voice of a goat.

The laugh that went up nearly took the roof off. Everybody joined in but two; for Banty Jones now learned for the first time that proverbs can lie and that a man can be versatile in bad luck. He left the table early.

The next day everybody in the field was guying Banty Jones and the Prince indiscriminately. The Prince soon won mercy by the honest confusion in his manner, the sheer boyish delight that flamed in his eyes above the crimson of his blush. Bant, however, answered laughter with wrath and mirth with profanity. But public jokes are rare in the oil regions, and the men made the most of this morsel.

"Bant, you remind me of old Cyunnel Clayborne," said Tom. "He sunk abote forty-'leven wildcat wells, ev'y one of 'em dryer 'n a bone. Yutha day he brought in a gusha that flowed ova the crown-block of the derrick—began with abote twelve thousan' barrels a day. Two days lata, his next do' neighbo' brings in a fifteen-thousan'-barrel gusha, that takes ev'y drop of Cyunnel Clayborne's oil—not a drop could he git even with a pump. 'Pears like Banty Jones has had his gusha stole offen him. An' there ain't no use pumpin', Bant."

Bant roared, "Tom Dominick, you can go plumb to ——"; but Tom only laughed the harder, and said: "Looks like I'd have to, befo' I strike oil."

It hurt the Prince to see his old chum making so bad a loser. He tried again and again to explain, but Bant choked him off with sneers and threats. Bant kept away from the boarding-house, too, but the jokes still flew from every derrick he passed. He stood it till the next pay-day; then he announced his determination to leave the field. He bade his old crew a sardonic farewell. The Prince, with much embarrassment, asked Bant to come aside for a word in private. But Bant answered:

"What you gotta say to me, Abbott, you can say befo' everybody. You went behin' my back to steal my gyurl. Now tell me what you gotta say to my face."

The Prince remembered the text of the soft answer and the wrath, and said: "You seem kind of set on thinking hard of me, Bant. You owe me a good deal, too, but I suppose I deserve to lose it and the friend that usually goes with borrowed money. I just want to remind you, though, that you owe Mrs. Glenny thirty-five dollars for board an' keep. She's getting along in years, Bant, and she's had hard luck. Don't forget to pay her before you go."

Bant spat scurrilously, and sneered: "Mind yo' own business, you white-livered Sunday-school hypocrite."

Before he could check his resentment the Prince had smashed the slander on Bant's teeth. Bant's head went against a post of the derrick, his feet slithered on the greasy floor, and he whirled over into the slush-pit. No hand reached to help him.

He scrambled out, white-slimed to the waist. He looked wildly about and saw at his feet a big monkey-wrench; he picked it up and rushed toward the Prince, who found nothing better than a loose plank. He had just time and room to swing it round, and it caught Bant on the side of the head. There was a short nail in the plank. When Bant rose there was blood on his face.

The Prince was overcome with regret, and, after the manner of his breed, came forward, helped the dazed Bant to his feet, and said:

"Come, Bant, let's call quits. Shake!"

Bant glared at the outstretched hand, knocked it aside, and instinctively reached for his hip-pocket. The Prince suffered all the anguish that the thought of a sudden death can bring to youth. He felt horribly unready. Then he saw that Bant had no revolver. Life came back to him, as if he had lost it and found it again. It was like pitching headlong over a cliff in a nightmare, and falling, falling—to unimaginable depths and calamity, only to wake in the familiar pillows, and slowly recover acquaintance with the dear old chromos on the wall and the sweet back-yard view through the dirty window.

As the Prince realized that he was still alive the rapture of mere existence swept over him like a gush of music. He had only a vague notion of Banty Jones moving off in vain wrath, tripping on the rusty pipe-lines, stumbling through scummy gutters of mud, and turning to call back again and again:

"I'll fix you for this! See if I don't. I'll fix you for this!"

The aftermath of the storm was seasickness. The Prince, unused to rage, was so weak that he would have fallen across the ratchet chain on the drum if Tom had not caught him and eased him to the floor.

There was a while of silence among the crew. Nobody spoke. Only, the drill snored like a sleepy pig. At length Jo spoke anxiously: "Do you s'pose Bant means to shoot the Prince?"

"They's no tellin'," said Tom with unnatural grimness. "I wisht he'd say somethin' to me so's I could kill him. I reckon the coroner's jury would plumb give me a vote o' thanks."

An hour later the red-headed teamster from Oklahoma drove by. He checked his mules in the knee-deep mud of the scandalous road, and hailed the crew.

"What's all this heah row abote, Tom? Bant Jones is down to Daddy Moses' place, liquorin' up, an' swearin' he's goin' to have the Prince's life. He's got a .45, an' every chamber is loaded. Nobody dast take it away; he's powerful ugly."

"Why don't one of the Rangehs nab him?" Jo asked.

"Why, the Rangehs was called up to Hempstead this moanin' where a Congressman and most of the prominent citizens had some gun-play, and air expectin' mo'."

Tom rose and went toward his cabin, pausing to call back to the teamster: "Say, Nat, if you see Bant Jones again, you tell him, for me, that I got my old automatic .38 in my pants' pocket, an' any time he gits down by my derrick I'll be tickleder'n a boy with a tin top to fill him so full o' soft-nosed bullets that he'll be wuth right smart at a junk shop. He ain't got half what's comin' to him yit, Bant ain't. He'll find the rest waitin' fer him heah!"

The teamster laughed. "All right, Tom, I'll tell him. Git ap!" And he lashed his mules to their task.

The crew went on with their business, all of them eying the Prince studiously. They were wondering what stuff he was made of. Now was the time to tell. He was back at his work, but his knees were wobbly and his look was queasy. Tom said, to give him a little brace, "Bant ain't got you skeered, Prince, has he? I nevva knowed you to be skeered of nobody or nothin' befo'."

"I ain't afraid of Bant Jones the best day he ever walked. But he won't fight fair. He packs a gun, and I haven't got one."

"Oh, is that all? I'll loan you this one."

"But I don't want to shoot anybody, Tom! Great Scott! what'd my mother say if I killed a man?"

Tom eyed the Prince narrowly, and said in a low tone: "What'd yo' motha say ef a man killed you? Think of that."

But the Prince was only the more distracted. He flung his head wildly, and cried: "Oh, I don't want to think! I guess I'd better go home, Tom. This place is too hot for me."

"Spoke like a brave man!" thundered Tom. "Home you go, young fella. Yo' job stops right heah. I won't employ no lady's maids round my rig. 'Tain't respectable."

Under the acid of Tom's contempt the Prince's face took on a look of such abject suffering that the old man's heart was touched. He said: "Aw, I was only foolin,' Prince. You're only a kid yet. We-all must he'p you through this streak of trouble. Next time you'll do us mo' proud. Jo, you take the Prince ova to yo' bodein'-ho'se for suppa and sleep to-night. Bant won't look there for him, and, by to-morra, he'll be ote o' town, or else he'll be soba an' ashamed."

When they knocked off work the Prince went with Jo as he was told. The situation was full of strange menace. He was afraid of it, terribly afraid. He felt that Bant might step out from behind any of the numberless trees they passed and shoot him down like a dog. Every derrick was a perfect ambush for a murderer. Every footfall he heard back of him sent through him a feeling as if centipedes were running over his shoulder-blades. He knew that he was a coward, but this knowledge only added shame to his panic. He dared not speak to Jo for fear his teeth would chatter on him. When at last he reached Jo's tent he felt sure that Bant would be within, waiting for him. Once safely inside he dreaded the place. It was a trap; he suffocated, ached with absolute fear. If he had had a gun he would have turned it on himself. But Jo neither carried nor owned a weapon, being more afraid of a revolver than of any other danger.

Jo's fellow-boarders watched the Prince askance and with thin-veiled contempt. After supper they all wandered off to the field-town to enjoy the eloquence of Banty Jones, who was ramping about like one of Homer's heroes telling man and Heaven what he was going to do to his enemy when he found him. Jo remained to comfort the Prince. Jo was a weakling, a notorious victim of bullies; his companionship and sympathy shamed the Prince more than anything else. Better death than this ignominy. He leaped to his feet with sudden desperation.

"Wheah yo' goin' naow?" said Jo anxiously.

"I'm goin' out and kill that yeller dog!" the Prince declared; then his knees loosened on him again and he sank down on a box.

"What'll they do at home when they get the news?" he cried. "I saw my mother once, Jo, when they brought word that my oldest sister was killed in a train-wreck. Oh, I can hear her choke, and just double up and drop! And they're trying to drive me to break her heart again. And I can hear the neighbors holler to each other as their wagons pass in the road: 'Hear about old man Abbott's boy?' They'll say, 'Why, he shot a man down in Texas in a drunken brawl over a woman.' Think of that, Jo! That'll be my epitaph: 'He was hung for killing a man in a drunken brawl over a woman.' And I'm only twenty years old! I haven't even voted, and I've got to hang—just because of a drunken dog.

"But why should this happen to me, Jo? To me of all people! I've always tried to do the square thing by everybody, Jo. And now I've got to kill or be killed—or what's worse, sneak out like a dirty coward. What does God mean by doing such things? That's what I want to know, what does He mean? What does God want me to do? What would God do in my place, do you think? If my getting killed would do anybody any good, why, I wouldn't mind; but just to be shot like a chipmunk, Jo—it's awful! What ought a fellow to do?"

Jo's poor brain could think of no comfort for such a problem as this. He sat in stupid misery. The Prince relapsed into silence, then fell to thinking aloud:

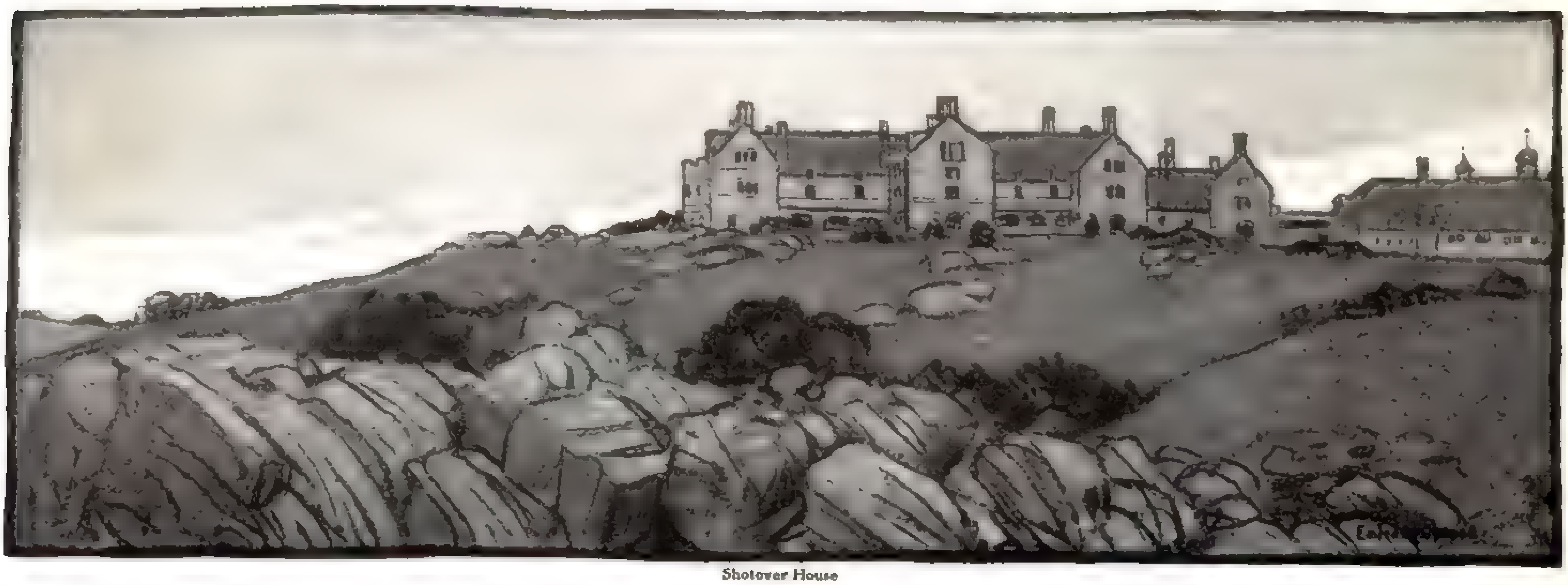
"Wonder which is the biggest coward, Jo: a fellow that would rather stand anything, rather run off and hide anywhere, than to bring disgrace on his home-folks, or a fellow that would rather commit murder than be called a coward? I guess I'd rather spare my mother's feelings than my own or anybody else's."

This thought, that he was enduring something for the sake of the one who had always been enduring for him, calmed the Prince profoundly and gave him the sense of contempt for public contempt that exalts a martyr.

An hour or two later Tom strolled in with a budget of news. "Banty Jones was to the Glenny bodein'-ho'se for suppa. Bant has hunted high an' low for you, Prince. I told him to keep away from my rig, or I'd take a hand. He

(Continued on Page 16)

THE FIGHTING CHANCE



Shotover House

BY ROBERT W. CHAMBERS

AUTHOR OF IOLE, ETC.

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III

THE first person he encountered in the gun-room was Quarrier, who favored him with an expressionless stare, then with a bow, quite perfunctory and non-committal. It was plain enough that he had not expected to meet Siward at Shotover House.

Kemp Ferrall, a dark, stocky, active man of forty, was in the act of draining a glass, when, through the bottom, he caught sight of Siward. He finished in a gulp, and advanced, one muscular hand outstretched: "Hello, Stephen! Heard you'd arrived and bolted with Sylvia Landis! That's all right, too, but you should have come for the opening day. Lots of native woodcock—eh, Blinky?" turning to Lord Alderdene; and again to Siward: "You know all these fellows—Mortimer yonder ——" There was the slightest ring in his voice; and Leroy Mortimer, red-necked, bulky and heavy-eyed, emptied his glass and came over, followed by Lord Alderdene blinking madly through his shooting-goggles and showing all his teeth like a pointer with a "tic." Captain Voucher, a gentleman with the vivid coloring of a healthy groom on a cold day, came up, followed by the Page boys, Willie and Gordon, who shook hands shyly, enchanted to be on easy terms with the notorious Mr. Siward. And last of all Tom O'Hara arrived, reeking of the saddle and clinking a pair of trooper's spurs over the floor—relics of his bloodless Porto Rico campaign with Squadron A.

It was patent to every man present that the Kemp Ferralls had determined to ignore Siward's recent foolishness, which indicated that he might reasonably expect the continued good-will of several sets the orbits of which intersected in the social system of his native city. Indeed, the few qualified to snub him cared nothing about the matter, and it was not likely that anybody else would take the initiative in being disagreeable to a young man the fortunes and misfortunes of whose race were part of the history of Manhattan Island. Siwards, good or bad, were a matter of course in New York.

"This salt air keeps one thirsty," he observed to Ferrall; then something in his host's expression arrested the glass at his lips. He had already been using the decanter a good deal; except Mortimer nobody was doing that sort of thing as freely as he. He set his glass on the table thoughtfully; a tinge of color had crept into his lean cheeks.

Ferrall, too, suddenly uncomfortable, stood up saying something about dressing; several men arose a trifle stiffly, feeling in every joint the result of the first day's shooting after all those idle months. Mortimer got up with an unfeigned groan; Siward followed, leaving his glass untouched.

One or two other men came in from the billiard-room. All greeted Siward amiably all excepting one who may not have seen him—an elderly, pink, soft gentleman with white downy chop-whiskers and the profile of a benevolent buck rabbit.

"How do you do, Major Belwether?" said Siward in a low voice, without offering his hand.

Then Major Belwether saw him, bless you! yes indeed! And though Siward continued *not* to offer his hand, Major Belwether meant to have it, bless your heart! And he fussed and fussed and beamed cordiality until he secured it in his plump white fingers and pressed it effusively.

There was something about his soft, warm hands which had always reminded Siward of the temperature and texture of a newly-hatched bird. It had been some time since he had shaken hands with Major Belwether; it was apparent that the bird had not aged any.

"And now for the shooting!" said the Major with an arch smile. "Now for the stag at bay and the winding horn ——

Where sleeps the moon
On Mona's rill ——

Eh, Siward?

And here's to the hound
With his nose upon the ground ——

Eh, my boy? That reminds me of a story ——" He chuckled and chuckled, his lambent eyes suffused with mirth; and slipping his arm through the pivot-sleeve of Lord Alderdene's shooting-jacket, hooking the other in Siward's reluctant elbow, and driving Mortimer ahead of him, he went garrulously away up the stairs, his lordship's bandy little legs trotting beside him, the soaking gaiters and shoes slopping at every step.

Mortimer, his mottled skin now sufficiently distended, greeted the story with a yawn from ear to ear; his lordship, blinking madly, burst into that remarkable laugh which seemed to reveal the absence of certain vocal chords requisite to perfect harmony; and Siward smiled in his listless, pleasant way, and turned off down his corridor, unaware that the Sagamore pup was following close at his heels until he heard Quarrier's even, colorless voice: "Ferrall, would you be good enough to send Sagamore to your kennels?"

"Oh—he's your dog! I forgot," said Siward, turning around. Quarrier looked at him, pausing a moment.

"Yes," he said coldly; "he's my dog."

For a fraction of a second the two men's eyes encountered; then Siward glanced at the dog, and turned on his heel with the slightest shrug. And that is all there was to the incident—an anxious, perplexed puppy lugged off by a servant, turning, jerking, twisting, resisting, looking piteously back as his unwilling feet slid over the polished floor.

So Siward walked on alone through the long eastern wing to his room overlooking the sea. He sat down on the edge of his bed, glancing at the clothing laid out for him. He felt tired and disinclined for the exertion of undressing. The shades were up; night quicksilvered the window-panes so that they were like a dark mirror reflecting his face. He inspected his darkened features curiously; the blurred and sombre-tinted visage returned the stare.

"Not a man at all—the shadow of a man," he said aloud —"with no will, no courage—always putting off the battle, always avoiding conclusions, always skulking. What chance is there for a man like that?"

As one who raises a glass to drink wine and unexpectedly finds water, he shrugged his shoulders disgustedly and got up. A bath followed; he dressed leisurely, and was pacing the room, fussing with his collar, when Ferrall knocked and entered, finding a seat on the bed.

"Stephen," he said bluntly, "I haven't seen you since that break of yours at the club."

"Rotten, wasn't it?" commented Siward, tying his tie.

"Perfectly. Of course it doesn't make any difference to Grace or to me, but I fancy you've already heard from it."

"Oh, yes. All I care about is how my mother took it."

"Of course; she was cut up, I suppose?"

"Yes, you know how she would look at a thing of that sort; not that any of the nine-and-seventy jarring sets would care, but those few thousands invading the edges, butting in—half or three-quarters inside—are the people who can't afford to overlook the victim of a fashionable club's displeasure—those, and a woman like my mother, and several other decent-minded people who happen to count in town."

Ferrall, his legs swinging busily, thought again; then: "*Who* was the girl, Stephen?"

"I don't think the papers mentioned her name," said Siward gravely.

"Oh—I beg your pardon; I thought she was some notorious actress—everybody said so. . . . Who were those callow fools who put you up to it? . . . Never mind if you don't care to tell. But it strikes me they are candidates for club discipline as well as you. It was up to them to face the governors, I think ——"

"No, I think not."

Ferrall, legs swinging busily, considered him.

"Too bad," he mused; "they need not have dropped you ——"

"Oh, they had to. But as long as the Lenox takes no action I can live that down."

Ferrall nodded: "I came to say something—a message from Grace—confound it! what was it? Oh—*could* you before dinner—*now*—just sit down and with that infernal facility of yours sketch a man chasing a gun-shy dog?"

"Why, yes—if Mrs. Ferrall wishes ——"

He walked over to the desk in his shirt-sleeves, sat down, drew a blank sheet of paper toward him, and, dipping his pen, drew carelessly a gun-shy setter dog rushing frantically across the stubble, and after him, bareheaded, gun in hand, the maddest of men.

"Put a Vandyke beard on him," grinned Ferrall over his shoulder. "There! Oh, Lord! but you *have* hit it! Put a ticked saddle on the cur—there!"

"Who is this supposed to be?" began Siward, looking up. But "Wait!" chuckled his host, seizing the still wet sketch, and made for the door.

Siward strolled into the bathroom, washed a spot or two of ink from his fingers, returned and buttoned his waistcoat, then, completing an unhurried toilette, went out and down the stairway to the big living-room. There were two or three people there—Mrs. Leroy Mortimer, very fetching with her Japanese-like coloring, black hair and eyes that slanted just enough; Rena Bonnesdel, smooth, violet-eyed, blond, and rather stunning in a peculiarly innocent way; Miss Caithness, very pale and slimly attractive; and the Page boys, Willie and Gordon, delightfully shy and interested, and having a splendid time with any woman who could afford the intellectual leisure.

Siward spoke pleasantly to them all. Other people drifted down—Marion Page, who looked like a schoolmarm and rode like a demon; Eileen Shannon, pink and white as a thorn blossom, with the deuce to pay lurking in her gray eyes; Kathryn Tassel and Mrs. Vendenning, whom he did not know, and finally his hostess, Grace Ferrall, with her piquant, almost boyish, freckled face, and sweet, frank eyes, and the figure of an adolescent.

She gave Siward one pretty sun-browned hand and laid the other above his, holding it a moment in her light clasp.

"Stephen! Stephen!" she said under her breath, "it's because I've a few things to scold you about that I've asked you to Shotover."

"I suppose I know," he said.

"I should hope you do. I've a letter to-night from your mother."

"From my mother?"

"I want you to go over it—with me—if we can find a minute after dinner." She released his hand, turning partly around: "Kemp, dinner's been announced, so cut that dog story in two! Will you give me your arm, Major Belwether? Howard!"—to her cousin, Mr. Quarrier, who turned from Miss Landis to listen—"will you please try to recollect whom you are to take in—and do it?" And, as she passed Siward, in a low voice, mischievous and slangy: "Sylvia Landis for yours—as she says she didn't have enough of you on the cliffs."

The others appeared to know how to pair according to some previous notice. Siward turned to Sylvia Landis with the pleasure of his good fortune so plainly visible in his face that her own brightened in response.

"You see," she said gayly, "you cannot escape me. There is no use in looking wildly at Agatha Caithness" he wasn't—"or pretending you're pleased," slipping her rounded, bare arm through the arm he offered. "You can't guess what I've done to-night—nobody can guess except Grace Ferrall and one other person. And if you try to look happy beside me, I may tell you—oh, yes; I've done two things: I have your dog for you!"

"Not Sagamore?" he said incredulously as he was seating her.

"Certainly Sagamore. I said to Mr. Quarrier, 'I want Sagamore,' and when he tried to give him to me I made him take my check. Now you may draw another for me at your leisure, Mr. Siward. Tell me, are you pleased?"—for she was looking for the troubled hesitation in his face and she saw it dawning.

"Mr. Quarrier doesn't like me, you know ——"

"But *I* do," she said coolly. "I told him how much pleasure it would give me. That is sufficient—is it not?—for everybody concerned."

"He knew that you meant to ——"

"No, that concerns only you and me. *Are* you trying to spoil my pleasure in what I have done?"

"I can't take the dog, Miss Landis ——"

"Oh," she said, vexed; "I had no idea you were vindictive!"

There was a silence; he bent forward a trifle, gravely scrutinizing a "hand-painted" name-card, though it might not have astonished him to learn that somebody's foot had held the brush. Somewhere in the vicinity Grace Ferrall had discovered a woman who supported dozens of relatives by painting that sort of thing for the summer residents at Vermilion Point down the coast. So being charitable she left an order, and being thrifty, insisted on using the cards in spite of her husband's gibes.

People were now inspecting them with more or less curiosity; Siward found his "hand-painting" so unattractive that he had just tipped it over to avoid seeing it when a burst of laughter from Lord Alderdene made everybody turn. Mrs. Vendenning was laughing; so was Rena Bonnesdel, looking over Quarrier's shoulder at a card he was holding—not one of the "hand"-decorated, but a sheet of notepaper containing a drawing of a man rushing after a gun-shy dog.

The extraordinary cackling laughter of his lordship obliterated other sounds for a while; Rena Bonnesdel possessed herself of the drawing and held it up amid a shout of laughter. And, to his excessive annoyance, Siward saw that, unconsciously, he had caricatured Quarrier—Ferrall's malicious request for a Vandyke beard making the caricature dreadfully apparent.

Quarrier had at first flushed up; then he forced a smile; but his symmetrical features were never cordial when he smiled.

"Who on earth did *that?*" whispered Sylvia Landis apprehensively. "Mr. Quarrier dislikes that sort of thing—but of course he'll take it well."

"*Did* he ever chase his own dog?" asked Siward, biting his lip.

"Yes—so Blinky says—in the Carolinas last season. It's Blinky—that's his notion of humor. Did you ever hear such a laugh? No wonder Mr. Quarrier is annoyed."

The gay uproar had partly subsided, renewed here and there as the sketch was passed along, and finally, making the circle, returned like a bad penny to Quarrier. He smiled again, symmetrically, as he received it, nodding his compliments to Alderdene.

"Oh, no," cackled his lordship; "I didn't draw it, old chap!"

"Nor I! I only wish I could," added Captain Voucher.

"Nor I—nor I—who did it?" ran the chorus along the table.

"*I* didn't do it!" said Sylvia gravely, looking across at Quarrier. And suddenly Quarrier's large, handsome eyes met Siward's for the briefest fraction of a second, then were averted. But into his face there crept an expressionless pallor that did not escape Siward—no, nor Sylvia Landis.

Presently under cover of a rapid fire of chatter she said: "*Did* you draw that?"

"Yes; I had no idea it was meant for him. You may imagine how likely I'd be to take any liberty with a man who already dislikes me."

"But it resembles him—in a very dreadful way."

"I know it. You must take my word for what I have told you."

She looked up at him: "I do." Then: "It's a pity; Mr. Quarrier does not consider such things humorous. He—he is very sensitive. . . . Oh, I wish that fool Englishman had been in Ballyhoo!"

"But *he* didn't do it!"

"No, but he put you up to it—or Grace Ferrall did. I wish Grace *would* let Mr. Quarrier alone; she has always been perfectly possessed to plague him; she seems unable to take him seriously, and he simply hates it. I don't think he'd tolerate her if she were not his cousin."

"I'm awfully sorry," was all Siward said; and for a while he gloomily busied himself with whatever was brought to him.

"*Don't* look that way," came a low voice beside him.

"Do I show everything as plainly as that?" he asked curiously.

"I seem to read you—sometimes."

"It's very nice of you," he said.

"Nice?"

"To look at me—now and then."

"Oh," she cried resentfully, "don't be grateful!"

"I really am not, you know," he said, laughing.

"That," she rejoined slowly, "is the truth. You say conventional things in a manner—in an agreeably personal manner that interests women. But you are *not* grateful to anybody for anything; you are indifferent, and you can't help being nice to people, so—some day—some girl will think you *are* grateful, and will have a miserable time of it."

"Miserable time?"

"Waiting for you to say what never will enter your head to say."

"You mean I—I ——"

"Flirt? No, I mean that you don't flirt; that you are always dreamily occupied with your own affairs, from which listlessly congenial occupation, when drawn, you are so unexpectedly nice that a girl immediately desires to see how nice you can be."

"What a charming indictment you draw!"

"It's a grave one, I assure you. I've been talking about you to Grace Ferrall; I asked to be placed beside you at dinner; I told her I hadn't had half enough of you on the cliff. Now what do you think of yourself for being too nice to a susceptible girl?"

They both were laughing now; several people glanced at them, smiling in sympathy. Alderdene took that opportunity to revert to the sketch, furnishing a specimen of his own inimitable laughter as a running accompaniment to the story of Quarrier and his dog in North Carolina, until he had everybody, as usual, laughing, not at the story but at him—all of which demonstration was bitterly offensive to Quarrier. He turned his eyes once on Miss Landis and on Siward, then dropped them.

The hostess arose; a rustle and flurry of silk and lace and the scraping of chairs, a lingering word or laugh, and the color vanished from the room, leaving a circle of men in black standing around the table.

Here and there a man bolted his coffee and strolled out to the gun-room. Ferrall, gesticulating vigorously, resumed his dog story to Captain Voucher; Belwether buttonholed Alderdene and bored him with an interminably facetious tale until that nobleman, threatened with maxillary dislocation, fairly wrenched himself loose.

"Ass!" muttered Alderdene, pattering about the room in his big, shiny pumps.

"Bridge, Captain?" asked Mortimer.

"Certainly," said Captain Voucher briskly.

"I'll go and shoo the Major into the gun-room," observed Ferrall—"unless ——" looking questioningly at Siward.

"I've a date with your wife," observed that young man, strolling toward the hall.

About the rooms were distributed girls en tête-à-tête, girls eating bonbons and watching the cards—among them Sylvia Landis, hands loosely clasped behind her, standing at Quarrier's elbow to observe and profit by an expert performance. As Siward strolled in she raised her dainty head for an instant, smiled in silence, and resumed a study of her fiancé's game.

A moment later, when Quarrier had emerged brilliantly from the mêlée, she looked up again, triumphantly, supposing Siward was lingering somewhere waiting to join her; and she was just a trifle surprised and disappointed to find him nowhere in sight. She had wished him to observe the brilliancy of Mr. Quarrier's game.

But Siward, outside on the veranda, was saying at that moment to his hostess: "I shall be very glad to read my mother's letter at any time you choose."

"It must be later, Stephen. I'm to cut in when Kemp sends for me. He has a lot of letters to attend to. . . . Tell me, what do you think of Sylvia Landis?"

"I like her, of course," he replied pleasantly.

Grace Ferrall stood thinking a moment: "That sketch you made proved a great success, didn't it?" And she laughed under her breath.

"Did it? I thought Mr. Quarrier seemed annoyed ——"

"Really? What a muff that cousin of mine is! He's such a muff, you know, that the very sight of his pointed beard and pompadour hair and his complacency sets me in fidgets to stir him up."

"I don't think you'd best use me for the stick next time," said Siward. "He's not *my* cousin, you know."

Mrs. Ferrall shrugged her boyish shoulders. "By the way," she said curiously, "who *was* that girl?"

"*What* girl?" he asked coolly, looking at his hostess, now the very incarnation of delicate mockery with her pretty, laughing mouth, her boyish sunburn and freckles.

"Nonsense! Do you think I'm going to let you off without some sort of confession? If I had time now—but I haven't. Kemp has business letters: he'll be furious, so I've got to take his cards."

She retreated backward with a gay nod of malice; turned to enter the house, and met Sylvia Landis face to face in the hallway.

"*You* minx!" she whispered; "aren't you ashamed?"

"Very much, dear. What for?" And catching sight of Siward outside in the starlight, Sylvia divined perhaps something of her hostess' meaning, for she laughed uneasily, like a child who winces under a stern eye.

"You don't suppose for a moment," she began, "that I have ——"

"Yes, I do. You *always* do."

"Not with that sort of man," she returned naively; "he *won't*."

Mrs. Ferrall regarded her suspiciously: "You always pick out exactly the wrong man to play with ——"

They had moved back side by side into the hall, the hostess' arm linked in the arm of the younger girl.

"The wrong man?" repeated Sylvia, instinctively freeing her arm, her straight brows beginning to bend inward.

"I didn't mean that—exactly. You know how much I care for his mother—and for him." The obstinate downward trend of the brows, the narrowing blue gaze signaled mutiny to the woman who knew her so well.

"What is so wrong with Mr. Siward?" she asked.

"Nothing. There was an affair ——"

"This spring in town? I know it. Is that all?"

"Yes—for the present," replied Grace Ferrall uncomfortably; then: "For goodness' sake, Sylvia, don't cross-examine me that way! I care a great deal for that boy —."

"So do I. I've made him take my dog."

There was an abrupt pause, and presently Mrs. Ferrall began to laugh.

"I mean it—really," said Sylvia quietly. "I like him immensely."

"Dearest, you mean it generously—with your usual exaggeration. You have heard that he has been foolish, and because he's so young, so likable, every instinct, every impulse in you is aroused to—to be nice to him ——"

"And if that were true ——"

"There is no harm, dear ——" Mrs. Ferrall hesitated, her gray eyes softening to a graver revery. Then, looking up: "It's rather pathetic," she said in a low voice. "Kemp thinks he's foredoomed—like all the Siwards. It's an hereditary failing with him—no, it's hereditary damnation. Siward after Siward, generation after generation, you know ——" She bit her lip, thinking a moment. "His grandfather was a friend of my grandparents, brilliant, handsome, generous, and—doomed! His own father was found dying in a dreadful place in London where he had wandered when stupefied—a Siward! Think of it! So you see what that outbreak of Stephen's means to those whose families have been New Yorkers since New York was. It is ominous, it is more than ominous—it means that the master-vice has seized on one more Siward. But I shall never, *never* admit it to his mother."

The younger girl sat wide-eyed, silent; the elder's gaze was upon her, but her thoughts, remote, centred on the hapless mother of such a son.

"Such indulgence was once fashionable; moderation is the present fashion. Perhaps he will fall into line," said Mrs. Ferrall thoughtfully. "The main thing is to keep him among people, not to drop him. The gregarious may be ashamed, but if anything, any incident, happens to drive him outside by himself, if he should become solitary, there's not a chance in the world for him. . . . It's a pity. I know he meant to make himself the exception to the rule and look! Already one carouse of his has landed him in the daily papers!"

Sylvia flushed and looked up: "Grace, may I ask you a plain question?"

"Yes, child," she answered absently.

"Has it occurred to you that what you have said about this boy touches me very closely?"

Mrs. Ferrall's wits returned nimbly from wool-gathering, and she shot a startled, inquiring glance at the girl beside her.

"You—you mean the matter of heredity, Sylvia?"

"Yes. I think my uncle Major Belwether chose you as his august mouthpiece for that little sermon on the dangers of heredity—the danger of being ignorant concerning what women of my race had done before I came into the world they found so amusing."

"I told you several things," returned Mrs. Ferrall composedly. "Your uncle thought it best for you to know."

The girl lifted her pretty, bare shoulders. "I'm sorry, but could *I* help it? Very well; all I can do is to prove a decent exception. Very well; I'm doing it, am I not?—practically scared into the first solidly suitable marriage offered—seizing the unfortunate Howard with both hands for fear he'd get away and leave me alone with only a queer family record for company! *Very* well! Now then, I want to ask you why everybody, in my case, didn't go about with sanctimonious faces and dolorous mien repeating, 'Her grandmother eloped! Her mother ran away. Poor child, she's doomed' doomed!'"

"Sylvia, I——"

"Yes—why didn't they? That's the way they talk about that boy out there!" She swept a rounded arm toward the veranda.

"Yes, but *he* has already broken loose, while you——"

"So did I—nearly! Had it not been for you, you know well enough I might have run away with that dreadful Englishman at Newport! For I adored him—I did! I did! and you know it. And look at my endless escapes from compromising myself! Can you count them?—all those indiscretions when mere living seemed to intoxicate me that first winter—and only my uncle and you to break me in!"

"In other words," said Mrs. Ferrall slowly, "you don't think Mr. Siward is getting what is known as a square deal?"

"No, I don't. Major Belwether has already hinted—no, not even that—but has somehow managed to dampen my pleasure in Mr. Siward."

Mrs. Ferrall considered the girl beside her—now very lovely and flushed in her suppressed excitement.

"After all," she said, "you are going to marry somebody else. So why become quite so animated about a man you may never again see?"

"I shall see him if I desire to!"

"Oh!"

"I am not taking the black veil, am I?" asked the girl.

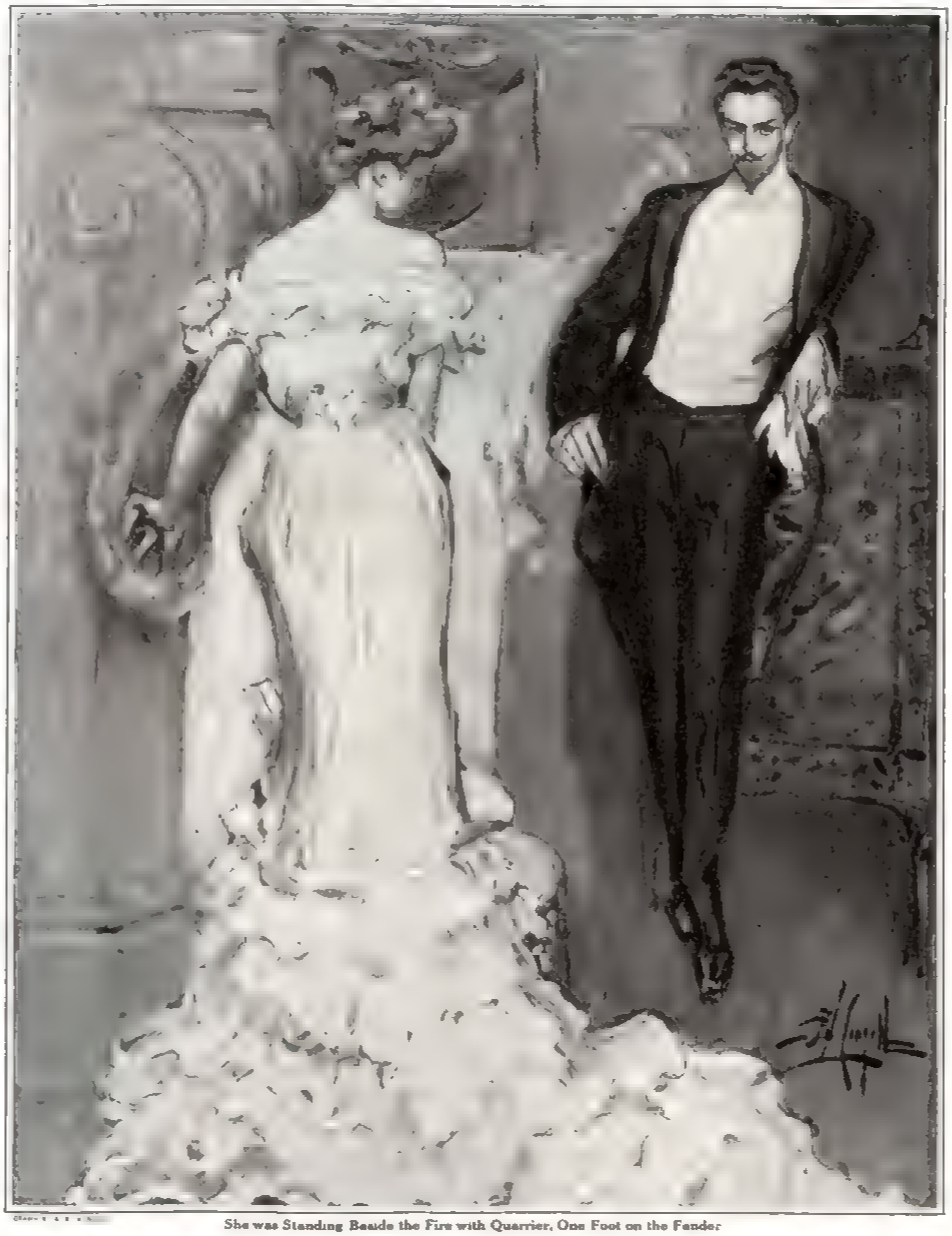
"Only the wedding veil, dear. But, after all, your husband ought to have something to suggest concerning a common visiting-list——"

"He may suggest—certainly. In the mean time I shall be loyal to my own friends—and afterward, too," she murmured to herself, as her hostess calmly dropped care like a mantle from her shoulders.

"Go and be good to this poor young man, then; I adore rows—and you'll have a few on your hands, I'll warrant. Let me remind you that your uncle can make it unpleasant for you yet, and that your amiable fiancé has a will of his own under his pompadour and silky beard."

"What a pity to have it clash with mine," said the girl.

Mrs. Ferrall looked at her: "Mercy on us! Howard's pompadour would stick up straight with horror if he could hear you! Don't be silly! Don't, for an impulse, for a caprice, break off anything desirable on account of a man for whom you really care nothing—whose amiable exterior and prospective misfortune merely enlist a very natural and generous sympathy in you."



She was Standing Beside the Fire with Quarrier, One Foot on the Fender

"Do you suppose that I shall endure interference from anybody?—from my uncle, from Howard?"

"Dear, you are making a mountain out of a molehill. Don't be emotional; don't let loose impulses that you and I know about, knew about in our school years, know all about now, and which we have decided must be eliminated——"

"You mean subdued; they'll always be there."

"Very well; who cares, as long as you have them in leash?"

Looking at one another, the excited color cooling in the younger girl's cheeks, they laughed, one with relief, the other a little ashamed.

"Kemp will be furious; I simply must cut in!" said Mrs. Ferrall, hastily turning toward the gun-room. Miss Landis looked after her, subdued, vaguely repentant, the consciousness dawning upon her that she had probably made considerable conversation about nothing.

"It's been so all day," she thought impatiently. "I'm exaggerated; I've worked up a scene about a man whose habits are not the slightest concern of mine. Besides that, I've neglected Howard shamefully!" She was walking slowly, her thoughts outstripping her errant feet, but it seemed that neither her thoughts nor her steps were leading her toward the neglected gentleman within; for presently she found herself at the breezy veranda door, looking rather fixedly at the stars.

The stars, shining impartially upon the just and the unjust, illuminated the person of Siward, who sat alone, rather limply, one knee crossed above the other. He looked up by chance, and, seeing her star-gazing in the doorway, straightened out and rose to his feet.

Aware of him, apparently, for the first time, she stepped across the threshold, meeting his advance half-way.

"Would you care to go down to the rocks?" he asked. "The surf is terrific."

"No—I don't think I care——"

They stood listening a moment to the stupendous roar.

"A storm somewhere at sea," he concluded.

"Is it very fine—the surf?"

"Very fine—and very relentless," he laughed; "it *is* an unfriendly creature, the sea, you know."

She had begun to move toward the cliffs; he fell into step beside her; they spoke little, a word now and then.

The perfume of the mounting sea saturated the night with wild fragrance; dew lay heavy on the lawns; she lifted her skirts enough to clear the grass, heedless that her silk-shod feet were now soaking. Then at the cliffs' edge, as she looked down into the white fury of the surf, the stunning crash of the ocean saluted her.

For a long while they watched in silence; once she leaned a trifle too far over the star-lit gulf and, recoiling, involuntarily steadied herself on his arm.

"I suppose," she said, "no swimmer could endure that battering."

"Not long."

"Would there be no chance?"

"Not one."

She bent farther outward, fascinated, stirred by the splendid frenzy of the breakers.

"I—think——" he began quietly; then a firm hand fell over her left hand; and, half-encircled by his arm, she found herself drawn back. Neither spoke; two things she was coolly aware of: that, urged, drawn by something subtly irresistible, she had leaned too far out from the cliff, and would have leaned farther had he not taken matters into his own keeping without apology; and that the pressure of his hand over hers remained a sensation still—a strong, steady, masterful imprint, lacking hesitation or vacillation. She was as conscious of it as though her hand still tightened under his—and she was conscious, too, that nothing of his touch had offended; that there had arisen in her no tremor of instinctive recoil. For never before had she touched or suffered a touch from a man, even a gloved greeting, that had not subtly repelled her, nor, for that matter, a caress from a woman without a reaction of faint discomfort

"Was I in any actual danger?" she asked curiously.

(Continued on Page 25)

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

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Poor Richard Junior's Philosophy

¶ If you would be thought a fool, play with a loaded pistol; if a knave, with loaded dice.

¶ Beware of the man who never buys a gold brick. The chances are that he sells them.

¶ When angry count ten before you speak. When "touched" count 1000 before you lend.

¶ When in a hurry to get to the poorhouse take the road that leads through the bucket-shop and passes the race-track.

The Law and the Fact

FORMERLY puts and calls were sold on the Chicago Board of Trade. They are an excellent speculative device, invented by no less moral and conservative a genius than Uncle Russell Sage. They serve a twofold purpose. First, they provide a different manner of betting for those who, haply, have grown weary of losing their money in the old way. We can see no reasonable objection to this. On the contrary, when a gentleman's nervous system has become deranged by the successive jolts of his wheat losses it seems decidedly humane to give him an opportunity to receive the shocks in a different spot, by trading in puts and calls. Second, they afford the speculator a kind of insurance by limiting his losses on each transaction, thus enabling him to reach bottom by a good smooth road with a uniform grade of about thirty-five per cent. instead of going over a series of ragged precipices. Also, if he takes the road he lasts longer, and this helps the commission trade. But the legislature, with its usual grasp of the merely superficial aspects, banned puts and calls as gambling and forbade trading in them. It did not ban wheat speculation in other forms, and such speculation has continued so flourishingly that a Federal court has held the vast bulk of all the Board's transactions in wheat to be pure gambling. The law against puts and calls amounted simply to this: That one might bet on the ace, king and queen, but not on the jack. Naturally, taking that card out of the pack caused considerable annoyance.

For a good while the Chicago trade in puts and calls was carried on at Milwaukee by wire. But even the wonderful advances in electrical science could scarcely obviate the inconveniences of having to keep the jack across the State line.

Now, we understand, counsel for the Board has devised a "contract of indemnity" which will in no wise conflict with the statute, yet which the non-legal observer could scarcely distinguish from that forbidden jack. When a law is not founded in common-sense and public need it is pretty sure to be evaded or ignored.

A Great Debate

THE Senate debate on the railroad rate bill consumed some two months. It was an exceedingly brilliant performance. Everybody says so. Many able observers accept it as demonstrating that there has been no decline in the intellectual calibre of the upper house as compared with its palmiest days. Probably it is hypercritical to point out an incidental fault in an exhibition of such surpassing excellence. The facts remain, however, that this great debate left the subject exactly where it found it. Prodigies of learning and eloquence were displayed, and the display was highly gratifying in everything excepting the particular that it shed no light worth mentioning upon the principal question under discussion.

This principal question—with which, in fact, the debate almost wholly concerned itself—was as to what view the Supreme Court would take of an attempt to limit the injunctional powers of the lower courts. Mr. Bailey upheld a certain opinion with great profundity and acumen. Mr. Spooner was fairly dazzling in contending for an opposite opinion. Of course neither Mr. Spooner nor Mr. Bailey could possibly say anything in the least conclusive on the subject. All they can possibly know is that Mr. Tillman, whom they called a corn-fed lawyer, is exactly as apt as any of the rest of them to guess what the court's decision will be. The debate very brilliantly illuminated its own practical futility. The light that it shed simply disclosed the darkness of the way. The great law arguments by the great lawyers served only to make more clear the hopelessness of trying to discover what the law, in certain constitutional cases, actually is—or actually will be when the Supreme Court has declared it. As a display of learning that might as well have been ignorance the debate was a tremendous success—and, of course, it pleased the chief participants.

The Conservative President

THE President is a sounder conservative than he is given credit for being by many of the leaders of his own party. For example, the paragraph on great fortunes in his "muck-rake" speech was denounced as "rank Socialism" by an excited Republican Senator. We think all Socialists—however lamentably they may fail to get together on any other proposition—will agree that as an exposition of their doctrine the President's suggestion was certainly rank.

What Mr. Roosevelt said was that we might ultimately have to consider the levying of a progressive Federal inheritance tax, aimed at the "transmission in their entirety of fortunes swollen beyond all healthy limits." It seems impossible that the most ingrained conservative soul could really, on sober second thought, find anything very shocking in that. Perhaps the workings of the plutocratic mind are beyond any mere lay comprehension. Nevertheless, we venture the opinion that the unhealthily swollen ones would adopt this suggestion with the greatest enthusiasm as a final settlement of the case between them and the public. Evasion of such a tax, by distributing the estate before death, foreign residence and the like, would be easy. Undistributed lifelong possession of a huge fortune would seem a sufficient prize to most predatory minds, even if the Government decimated the accumulation at the possessor's death.

Thanks to recent journalistic enterprise, the public now knows how unhealthily swollen fortunes are acquired. With the rare exceptions of the bonanza miner, like Mackay, or the lucky speculator in city real estate, like Astor and Marshall Field, practically all the vast fortunes originate in some unjust special privilege either given or tolerated by the Government. Practically every one of them is due to unjust law, or to the evasion of law. The old fable that the enormous accretions were won by superior ability in a fair field has been very thoroughly exploded. Radical, or progressive, persons would like to change the conditions which produce the unhealthy swellings. Post-mortem alleviation is generally of the essence of conservatism.

The Culture Craze

AS A PEOPLE we are terribly busy getting culture—at least the women are. There was a time when the Browning class was a joke; but we have long passed that simple stage. Purely literary culture is a commonplace in the face of economics, sociology, physical culture, domestic science, art, music, and the rest. It is a poor crossroads that can't boast at least a university extension lecture, and the woman who isn't preparing a paper in the social science class, or on child-life, or on the drama of the future, is a rare barbarian luxury that is kept carefully concealed by her husband and male friends.

The net product of all this culture process ought to begin to be evident. Apparently it shows itself on the news-stands in the multitude of magazines about all sorts of things; but perhaps that is cause rather than effect. These are the culture germs to breed culture that the busy publishers put forth. All this devotion to culture hasn't made any appreciable influence upon our manners or our voices; the one remains fresh and the other loud, we must admit. Nor can any great boom in national taste be perceived by the most delicate culture-recording machine: we still like cheap and silly plays and read probably the thinnest lot of rubbish that the printing press ever put out. And as a people we still prefer vulgar hotels to a decent domestic privacy. Evidently culture is meant to give us something to talk about rather than something to be. We have lots to talk about.

But our foreign guests say very pretty things about our women as they leave our shores. They vary the words, but their bread-and-butter notes read much alike: "Yours is a wonderful country" (and so on according to space). "Your men are great workers, good providers. But they haven't much to say for themselves. They let the women do the talking. And your women are wonderful. They are stars! There's nothing just like them elsewhere on the earth. They can speak French and know what is doing in London. They play golf and drive automobiles. They have views on art and Egyptian exploration. They are wonderful!" Culture does it.

An Indestructible Fiction

WHEN a great calamity visits a modern city—Chicago, Galveston, Baltimore, San Francisco—it appears that the most artificial thing is the most enduring. What may be called natural property—that which is valuable because it is intrinsically useful—may be completely destroyed; and the only large asset that remains consists of the titles to the real estate. In the business districts of every large city little plots of ground bring enormous prices, not for any productive power in themselves, but because they happen to be focal points for the energies of a vast number of people. A great calamity wipes out this artificial value actually; yet it persists indestructibly, although it is, in fact, immediately after the disaster, a pure fiction. The best retail site is actually worthless. There are no crowds of shoppers to come to it, no modern transportation facilities to bring them. It may even be, as in San Francisco, that whatever people are within reach have no money to shop with. But the fictive value remains after the real value in buildings and goods has been destroyed. Indeed, this pure fiction of an immense value in the real estate—as though it still lay in the centre of a rich, populous city instead of a waste heap of ruins—furnishes the foundation for the rebuilding of the city. The man with the best retail site, though it be only a rubbish pile, can mortgage it for money to put up another store with. The modern city, being destroyed, rises in the same spot and substantially the same proportions because it must build mostly upon real-estate values which, although entirely artificial, survive after the rest is wiped out.

There is no particular moral to this; but the next time the business-district real-estate owner yammers to you that his taxes amount to sheer robbery, say to him: "Go to! We not only make you rich by walking past your corner, without effort or virtue on your part; but you alone are placed beyond the reach of chance and misfortune. You have a cinch that not even an earthquake can loosen. Be content."

What Kind of an Animal is Man?

MR. BRYAN has stated, in a recent article, the difference between the Individualist and the Socialist with remarkable clearness. When all the froth of discussion is pushed aside, the fundamental difference between the ordinary well-meaning citizen of to-day, who is generally an Individualist, and the average Socialist comes down to a guess about the real nature of the animal man. The conservative person, who believes that society must develop on pretty much the same lines that exist to-day, thinks that man is a predatory animal who has evolved whatever good characteristics there may be in him through a fierce competitive struggle, and he can see no reason why man should change his nature in any practical reach of time by any change in the social system. Therefore he looks with suspicion on all Utopian plans according to which man would be expected to work without the competitive spur. The Socialist, on the other hand, no matter what fringe of further opinion he may have, thinks that the competitive struggle is responsible for the evil in the world, and looks for an improvement in man, and hence in society, only when competition is eliminated. He thinks better of the nature of man than the Individualist; he believes that the best results may be got out of him without the stern discipline of competition. So the matter rests with psychology—will man relieved from industrial competition lie down and wallow, or will he continue to hustle for all he is worth?

All of us answer that question according to our individual experience of life and our own temperaments. Older men who have had most experience with life, who have observed men of all classes and over a considerable period, are rarely Socialists. They know too well the weaknesses of human nature, and they know the need there is of the spur to get the average man to exert himself. Young men, who have faith in place of knowledge, who think from theory rather than experience, become Socialists. Strong men, so placed in the struggle that they have a good point of attack, usually enjoy the fight and ask nothing better than a tolerably fair chance. But men who have been unfavorably placed in the fight, men who are idealists or tender of heart, and who hate the struggle—such are attracted by the visions of the Socialist. And no one can deny that the latter class is gaining rapidly in numbers, and also that many men of the other, more conservative, class now accept without question much of the Socialist's beliefs. We imagine that even Mr. Bryan's article would make Thomas Jefferson turn over in his grave and weep.

MEN & WOMEN

The Pride of Tennessee

SOME Representatives were in the workshop of the official stenographers in the Capitol, watching the reporters with their phonographs and the copyists with their phonographs put into manuscript the oratory spilled a few minutes before on the floor.

Their guide showed them the various labor-saving devices, including the rubber stamps that are used for the set phrases that occur in the Congressional Record, such as "and so the bill was passed" and "The House being in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union."

"Very interesting," said one of the party, "but I do not see here the rubber stamp reading. 'MR. GAINES (of Tenn.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to so-and-so.'"

John Wesley Gaines is the word Vesuvius of Washington. He is always in eruption, spouting language made molten by the fires that burn within him. He has ideas on every known subject and on a choice assortment unknown to anybody but him. He sits on the Democratic side, eager and intent, watching for a chance. He sees an opening. Siss—boom! away he goes, tum-te-te-tum-te-te-tump, protesting, asserting, denying, claiming, casting back into their teeth, viewing with alarm and pointing with pride. He is as universal as kerosene. He is as permeating as gasoline. Stop him? Go turn off the waters of Niagara. Go sweep back the tide.

Undaunted and unabashed, no puny debater of the majority can bring him to his oratorical knees. He is the inventor and sole proprietor of the Gaines System of Serving One's Constituents. It is a simple system, but none other than a Gaines can use it, although John Wesley has exploited it for these ten years in full view of his audiences. It is this: No matter what is under discussion, no matter where the debate leads, GET IN. He is no shrinking violet. He proclaims. His idea of public service is to get his name in the Record. Hence the inquiry: Where is the John Wesley Gaines rubber stamp?

He can scent an opportunity for a parliamentary inquiry before the proposition is half formed by the conditions on the floor. He can say: "Mr. Speaker, I move to strike out the last word," quicker than any man in the House and thus get his minute's talk. He will take any spare time any bill captain has to yield, whether it is one minute or one hour, and he will plug it full of resounding language. If all else fails, if there is no other course, he can always figure out a personal privilege plea and then no one can say him nay.

"You keep out of my speech!" shouted the testy Grosvenor at him one day, when John Wesley was asking questions of that doughty warrior. "You keep out of my speech!" many another has shouted at him, but all for naught. John Wesley never keeps out. Not he. His motto is, "Get in!"

He is scarred from head to foot by thrusts and jabs. He bears the bruises of bludgeons, blunderbusses and big sticks, but he laughs at his own marks as if he never felt a wound. They can't whip him. They can't stop him. They can't put the soft pedal on him. John Wesley is always on tap, the spigot open and the words running free.

John Wesley always has his picture taken with his profile showing. It is a fine profile. That masterful nose, that dominating chin, that broad forehead sloping back to the tangled mass of iron-gray hair, that eagle's eye—perhaps you think John Wesley isn't cognizant of the ample beauties of that profile. The galleries see it. He sits swung in his chair so that all who come to gaze at the busy hive of statesmanship in the House cannot fail to note those classic outlines, standing in sharp relief against the ruddy mahogany of the desks. And they do gaze, lost in admiration. "Who is that man—that man there with the gray hair and the handsome face?" ask the tourists. "That, madam, is John Wesley Gaines, of Tennessee," the guide replies.

Senator Elkins of West Virginia, Who has Made Money and Knows How to Get the Worth of It

They like him down in Tennessee, for they have sent him to five Congresses and, no doubt, will continue to send him as long as he cares to come. They like him in the House, for with all his wordiness he is a companionable chap. They like his nerve and his verve. They think they pay no attention to him, but they do.

John Wesley Gaines, of Tennessee
That Masterful Nose, that Dominating Chin, that Broad Forehead Sloping Back to the Tangled Mass of Iron-gray Hair, that Eagle's Eye

"How is it," asked a newcomer of the Honorable "Pete" Hepburn, of Iowa, who was himself a warrior of many battles, "that even though John Wesley Gaines makes himself so obnoxious, he nearly always gets what he wants?"

"Suppose," said Colonel Pete, speaking in parables, "you were trying to do business and a man came and sat down beside you and began filing a saw. He'd get what he wanted, wouldn't he?"

See that! There's the method of it. John Wesley knows a hawk from a phonograph, and has a full appreciation of the value of a megaphone.

Once, in his more beautiful days, he was best man at the marriage of the daughter of the late Nelson Dingley, the author of the Dingley Tariff Bill, and the greatest of all Protectionists, to James C. Hooe, the Washington lawyer. John Wesley went to Lewiston, Maine, arriving a day before the wedding. He had nothing to do that night, so he hired a hall and a band to get a crowd and made a Free Trade speech, right under the shadow of Dingley's home.

That was real Gaines; real, simon-pure Gaines. There is no wilderness in which he will not let his voice cry out, and where better to talk Free Trade than where Nelson Dingley lived?

There is no one like him, no one half like him, no one that is even a twelfth-carbon copy of him. The Tennessee poet knew his business when he sang:

> John Wesley Gaines! John Wesley Gaines!
> Thou monumental pile of brains!
> Proud Tennessee relies on thee—
> John Wesley Gaines!

All He Wanted

SENATOR STEPHEN B. ELKINS, of West Virginia, has many millions, but that doesn't mean he spends any of his pile foolishly or without due regard to getting his money's worth.

He decided, a time ago, that he would buy an automobile, and he selected a particular make after long and prayerful consideration. He asked for demonstration after demonstration, up hills, through sand, at all speeds and under all conditions.

After a week of "show me" he sent for his son to come over from New York. The son came and put the car through its paces for another week. Then it came time for the son to return and the agent took the father and the heir to the railroad station. He tried to clinch his order on the way down, but got no satisfaction. When they reached the station, he said: "Good-by, Senator, I must go now."

"Why?" asked the Senator; "where are you going?"

"Oh," the agent replied, "I am going to take this machine back to the shop and teach it to read and write. Those are the only requirements you haven't demanded."

Elkins laughed and bought the machine.

Presidential Prejudice

WHEN President Roosevelt was running a ranch in the West he absorbed many of the contentious ideas of the cattlemen. One is that a man who raises beef is a real man, but a man who raises sheep is of lesser stuff.

A short time ago a Montana friend went to him to plead for a man who was applicant for a position out there.

"No, sir," said the President, "I cannot appoint him. I have promised the place to So-and-So."

"But, Mr. President," insisted the Montana friend, "that man you intend to appoint is a sheep man."

"Now, see here," shouted the President, "it isn't fair to appeal to my prejudices that way!"

The Voice that was Mute

WHEN Charles P. Norcross, now a well-known Washington correspondent, began his newspaper career he was sent to "cover" one of the courts. His business was to look at the docket and find the facts about any case that seemed to him to warrant writing about.

One afternoon he discovered an entry that said one William Burns had been arrested and fined ten dollars for stealing a martingale from James Jones, a neighbor.

He recited these facts in an introductory paragraph and then went on: "This criminal was justly punished, for the pretty little martingale he stole was the joy and comfort of the wife of James Jones. She kept it in a cage in her parlor and when, tired with the work of the day, the martingale began to pour forth those strains of melody for which our Pittsburg martingales are famous, she found great pleasure. Such miscreants as this man Burns should not be allowed at large, especially when they descend so low as to steal harmless and melodious martingales."

Too Popular

REPRESENTATIVE SAMUEL W. McCALL, of Massachusetts, is a constitutional insurgent. He revolts every day against something. He believes the minority is always right, and so he is always in opposition.

A short time ago he took his usual daily trip off the Republican organization reservation. He had an amendment to a pending bill and pressed it to a vote.

After the vote, a friend discovered McCall in the cloakroom walking up and down and pawing the air.

"What's the matter, McCall?" he asked.

"Matter?" shouted McCall. "Enough and more is the matter! I am getting too blamed popular: seventeen people voted with me on that amendment!"

The Hall of Fame

¶ One of Senator Burrows' favorite luncheon dishes is a glass of milk with an apple sliced and dropped in it.

¶ Victor Murdock, Representative from Kansas, has redder hair than any man in Congress and it isn't so red at that. It is about sorrel.

¶ J. Pierpont Morgan has his cigars especially made for him in Havana. They are bigger than the special ones made there for King Edward.

¶ President Roosevelt's greatest athletic proficiency is in wrestling. He is only a fair boxer, a reasonably good rider, an excellent walker, an indifferent fencer, and his game of tennis would make angels weep.

¶ Representative Joseph C. Sibley, of Pennsylvania, the millionaire who has announced that he will retire from Congress and spend the rest of his life having fun, has a unique record. He came to the Fifty-seventh Congress as a Democrat and was elected to the Fifty-eighth as a Republican.

Representative McCall of Massachusetts, Who is Afraid of Becoming Too Popular

The beauty of the home depends largely upon the daintiness of the wall decorations. In addition to the daintiness, you must also consider the economy, the durableness and the healthfulness of the material you use to decorate the walls.

Alabastine is the most economical of materials for wall decoration because it is the most durable, and can be applied time after time without washing or scraping the walls. It is the most healthful, because Alabastine is antiseptic and actually destroys all germ life that comes in contact with it.

Alabastine
The Sanitary Wall Coating

can be applied to any wall in tints to correspond and harmonize with the furnishings of the room. Full detailed directions are given on each package, so that anyone can use Alabastine quickly and easily, by simply mixing it with cold water and applying with a flat brush. The wall once coated with Alabastine can be redecorated with other tints, as desired, year after year at less than one half the cost of any other wall covering.

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Where Life is Marked Down

(Continued from Page 10)

wa'n't so awful drunk that he couldn't say: 'I ain't lookin' for no trouble with you, Tom; I'm just ransackin' this town for one——' Well, he used some rather shopwo'ne expressions. He give Mabel Glenny some sass, and she slapped his face for him, and said she'd take his gun off him ef he distubbed her bo'ders. So he just laughed and said: 'Well, you're goin' to lose yo' star bo'der, Mabel—that Little Lord Fauntleroy of yo'ne. Betta kiss him good-by.' Then he went stumblin' off. But Mabel on'y culled up her lip and says: 'You-all notice that I don't weah no gahnet ring no mo'.' "

The Prince hid his face in his hands. The contempt of a sweetheart or the grief of a mother—which has been the harder for a man to bear, since time was?

And now the red-headed teamster stopped in to report the situation. He had followed Bant from saloon to saloon, from defiance to defiance, until the joy lost its edge. He glanced toward the Prince with a quick, slant look that brought no solace. He said: "Somebody ought sho' to plug up Bant Jones' windpipe, Tom. His mouth ain't nevva been no prayer-book, but when he gits to tearin' down a lady's reppytation in bah-rooms, somethin' ought to be done. It ain't my quarrel, and I don't know Miss Glenny well enough to persume to defend her, but the fust wuds I evva heard ag'in' her characta was from Bant Jones; and he claims to know—— Hullo, Prince! what's the matta?"

"Tom, lend me your gun. I've got to put an end to that rattlesnake. He's lived too long."

The boy's face looked like marble, hard and white and set; but the teamster said: "I reckon you betta postpone that piece o' street-cleanin', Prince. Some of the fellas has pussuaded Bant to go to bed somewheres. He's sleepin' the peaceful sleep of the drunk. You couldn't shoot him now."

And Tom, holding the boy back forcibly, tried to quiet his growing frenzy: "Best let it res' for to-night, boy. You've stood it this long. A little mo' won't hurt you. Tomorra Bant may be soba and remawseful. Ef he ain't—well, you can aim straighta by daylight. Heah's ma gun, though."

He stared hard at the Prince, then continued: "But looka heah, Prince, just start this thing right. Don't you make no woman's quarrel ote o' this. In the fust place it ain't polite; in the second, no lady on earth is wuth killin' a man fer. I don't believe in the sect maseff. The way I'd feel in yo' place, Prince, is abote like this: Heah I am settled down earnin' a fair livin' and satisfied for the time bein' with job an' locality. Along comes a man that says: 'I don't like yo' way o' doin' things. Yo' face gives me a pain. I don't want to see yo' roun' the place no mo'. Git up an git!' If a man talked thataway to me, an' if he was ma boss and payin' ma wages, I'd bow low an' take ma firin' peaceable. If he was a Rangeh, or a constable, and I was plumb soba, I'd say: 'I take off ma hat to old Mr. Law and Orda'.' But ef he was only a common man like me, I'd say: 'I'm an Ame'ican citizen, I am, an' one of us is goin' to leave heah feet fust.' No, I wouldn't stop to say it. I'd just think it and shoot.

"Take ma advice, Prince; don't you go fightin' nobody for no piece o' bombazine. You stand solely on yo' inalienearable rights as an Ame'ican citizen tew life, libutty, and the pussuit o' good wages. And whatevva you do, don't forgit ma wuds: Don't draw exceptin' to shoot, and don't shoot exceptin'—well, you know."

Tom wrung the Prince's limp hand, laid his revolver on a box and took the teamster away with him. Jo blew out the light and began to snore the moment he fell over on his cot. How could the Prince sleep? He had a whole life to live through. Here in his very boyhood he was brought close against the climax and crisis of his days on earth. He made and unmade decisions at shuttle-speed, and every decision had some element of wrong in it, some guaranty of regret.

It had been easy to say, "It's better to be killed than to kill," but it looked different as a reality. It was a beautiful theory that a man should prefer his mother's comfort to all other comforts, but the word "coward"—that hideous word—was eating through his heart like a rotary drill.

The next morning at six o'clock the Glenny dining-room was nearly full. All the men were conspicuously clean-handed and clean-faced; the comb-grooves were still in their wet hair. The only empty places were Bant's at the head of the table, and the Prince's at the end of the bench, nearest the kitchen. But everybody was too drowsy or too full of morning-grouch to say anything. This sensation was already ancient history. Even Miss Glenny had slept over her romance, and was deciding that the Oklahoma man was rather likely, and his hair a nicer red than she had thought at first.

And then the Prince came in. Everybody stared at him. Food-laden knives and coffee-swimming saucers paused before gaping mouths. They noticed that the Prince held his head very high for a man who had taken a dare and dodged a direct challenge. And there was a curt vigor to his nod that was surprising. He looked at Mabel with an appealing gaze. She smiled back at him with a look of motherly pity and landlady-like tolerance. He felt the change, but gave no sign except for a certain hardening of the jaw-muscles.

The Oklahoma man asked with a little sting of raillery: "Have you seen Bant Jones to-day?"

"Shut up, you Indian," growled Tom, "or I'll break a plate ova yo' haid!"

"Well, I thought the Prince might lak to know that I seen Bant this moanin', and he says he won't leave town till he finds him."

"I won't be hard to find," said the Prince.

Everybody started; it seemed that a stranger's voice had spoken.

Miss Glenny looked at the Prince with new eyes. She asked him if he wouldn't like some more condensed milk in his coffee. As he poured it from the gash in the can a figure passed the window. The others did not notice. But every muscle in the Prince's body turned to stone. His eyes went up till only the whites showed. He set the can down hard. Tom, who sat opposite, stared in dismay, thinking the boy was paralyzed.

There was a sound of a man scraping his boots on the edge of the front porch. The outer door squeaked and slammed. There was a muddy tread on the uncarpeted hall. The screen door opened and a man stepped in. His black hat was low over his eyes. His right hand was in his coat-pocket. He peered round the half-lighted room.

Nobody troubled to turn and see who was entering. Miss Glenny had recognized the step. She fastened her critical, waiting eyes on the Prince. She saw him make a quick motion to his pocket, rise to full height, raise both clasped hands slowly and steadily, as if pointing at the newcomer. Just as she heard the screen door flap she heard a sound like its echo; saw a flash of light at the end of the Prince's finger; saw his hands recoil; heard a click; saw the Prince ready again, and waiting.

She looked at Bant. There was a sudden hole in his hat. He was trying to speak and could not. On his face there was a look of utter amazement. Then he went to the floor all in a bunch. Out of his coat-pocket fell a loaded revolver, and around it pattered, like hail, a dozen loose cartridges.

The Oklahoma man bent down over him, then looked up, spat contemplatively, and murmured:

"The joke's on Bant, boys."

Tom was thinking of some one else: "Gen'lemen," he said, "I want you-all to take a good look at that gun of Bant's—every chamber full, an' a pocket-load of loose cattridges. I want you-all to rememba them impawtant details when we-all goes befo' the jury."

Mrs. Glenny and Mabel were thinking still of a *tertium quid*. Mrs. Glenny wailed: "I always uster say that you couldn't nevva down no Christian; but I'm beginnin' to distrus' ma luck." And Mabel added: "Worst is, it'll likely give our bodein'-ho'se a bad name, though nobody can't say that I and maw ain't always been puffect ladies."

Tom turned to the Prince, who was cowering on his bench like a whipped dog, his skin shivering over him everywhere. His one feeling was nausea. Tom laid a hand on his shoulder, but the Prince stared fixedly at his prostrate foe, the man who had tried to run him out of town. It seemed now that it had been too small an offense to merit such punishment. The Prince whispered to Tom:

"I'd give a million dollars if it was me instead of him."

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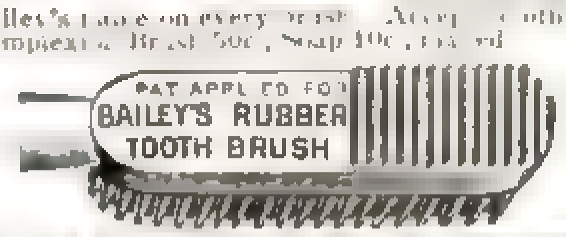

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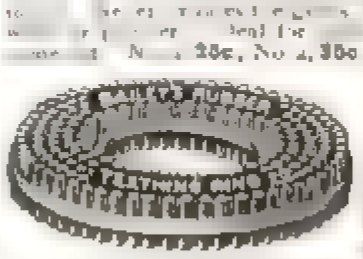

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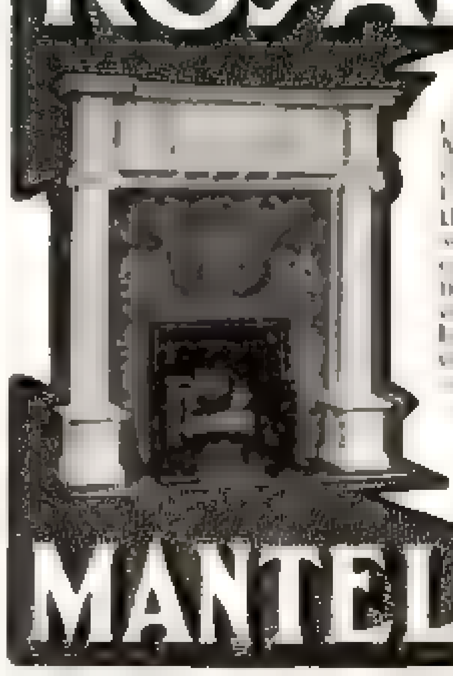

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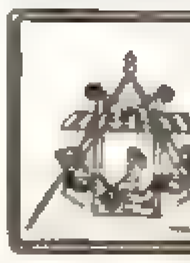

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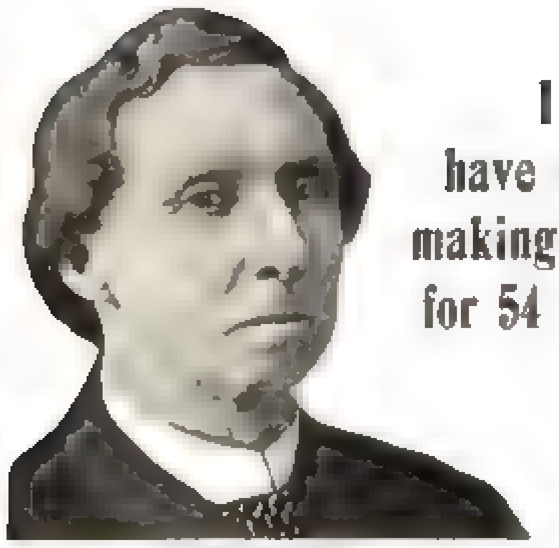

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Tom sniffed: "Don't make any mo' of a fool of yo'seff than you can he'p. I'll see you through if you'll only put on long pants and be a man."

"But he was a friend of mine!" the Prince gasped, "and now—look at him!"

Tom did look at him, for Bant had begun to move, to mumble and toss like a man frowsy with sleep. He opened his eyes, looked round in bewilderment, and growled:

"Did I fall ote of bed, or what?"

Everybody stared in silent wonder at the miracle and Bant had time to realize everything, to drawl out one long "Oh-h!" and explain:

"Blamed ef I didn't think I was daid."

He glowered at the Prince and began to fumble in his pocket. Tom spoke up. "Prince, you'd betta clean up this job now for good and all." The Prince wanted to give Bant a royal welcome back to earth. He loved him for being kind enough to live. But Tom's eyes quelled his enthusiasm, so he took his automatic .38 out of his pocket and carelessly fingered it as he said with a feeble effort at severity

"Bant, you said you was a-goin' to run me out of town. I think you'd better take a little run yourself. What do you think?"

"I think I better had," said Bant, eying the glittering nickel-plated surface of the .38. Then he added, to do the thing handsomely: "And I reckon I owe you an apology, Prince."

"I guess you owe Mrs. Glenny thirty-five dollars," was the Prince's answer.

Bant got to his feet, and found in his pocket just thirty-three dollars, mostly in silver badly tarnished by the gas of the region. He looked at it sheepishly.

"Would any gent trus' me fer two dollas?" he asked. There was a silence that paid eloquent tribute to Bant's commercial standing in the community.

Then the Prince, with some uneasiness, volunteered:

"I'll make it ten so that you can pay your fare out of town."

"That's right handsome of you, Prince," said Bant; "I'll return it to you befo' long."

"I'll expect it when I get it," said the Prince.

Bant clumsily turned over to Mrs. Glenny the sum he owed her, and stooped to pick up his hat. A lock of his hair fell through the hole in it. He looked at it, and a glimmer of his old impudence came over his face:

"Say, Mabel," he said, "you can keep this to rememba me by."

And Mabel took it. Bant sure had a way with the women. But the men glared at him the more contemptuously, and he knew better than to offer his hand to any of them. He rubbed his scalp, found a drop or two of blood on his finger from a little scratch made by the grazing bullet. This scar of conflict gave him a little more self-respect, and he turned with his old swagger, winked at the Prince, slapped the screen door shut after him and strode off through the mud toward the station.

The Prince looked after him with all the affection one feels for one's vanquished enemies; and he said: "Gosh, but I'm glad I missed him. And, say, Mabel—I mean, Miss Glenny—I guess I could stand another cup of coffee before the whistle blows."

The other boarders sat down again to finish their interrupted breakfast. As Mabel returned with a cup of steaming coffee for the Prince, Tom let out a wild guffaw:

"I'll be goldurned ef Mabel ain't went and put on that gahnet ring once mo'."

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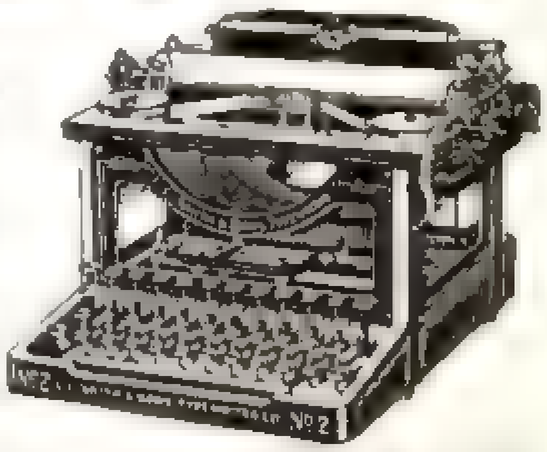

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PLAYER FOLK

Adele Ritchie

The Long Lost Sovanoff

ADELE RITCHIE tells this story of a French musician whom it is kindest, perhaps, to call Gaston. Mrs. Clarence Mackay was at one of his concerts with Mr. Mackay, and in an intermission he came up to their box to see them. During the conversation, which was in French, the only language Gaston understood, she saw Sovanoff, the great Russian conductor, sitting below in the aisle seat of the seventh row. She pointed him out, and asked if Gaston knew him. Six years ago in the Latin Quarter, Gaston said, they had been brothers, and he was overcome at the honor Sovanoff had paid him in coming to his concert. He excused himself to go down to speak to him, and Mrs. Mackay said she would be glad if Sovanoff would come up and let them meet him. When Gaston had left she suggested that it would be more hospitable for Mr. Mackay to go down and bring the great conductor up in person.

When Gaston reached the aisle seat he laid his hand with hearty affection upon Sovanoff's shoulder, who thereupon sprang up and faced him. Gaston threw himself upon his friend's neck, embraced him with both arms, and seemed about to kiss him on the cheek, after the Continental custom, when Sovanoff planted both hands on Gaston's chest and thrust him off with violence.

By this time Mr. Mackay had reached them. He found Gaston protesting eternal friendship and gratitude in French, while his victim, who only understood one word of what he was saying, shouted back in English: "I am not Sovanoff! I am a Broatway merchant, and my name is Fincklestein!" Mr. Mackay separated the belligerents, and, explaining the situation, led Gaston back to the box. Having partly calmed himself, Gaston departed to finish his concert.

For some moments they waited, and no Gaston appeared on the stage. Then there was a smothered cry in the aisle outside the box. Mr. Mackay rushed out, and, following the noise, found that Gaston had shut himself inside a closet which, in his perturbation, he had mistaken for the stage door.

A Tragic Gottschalk

ONE of the hardships in the life of the character-actor is that, however great his abilities, he can get nothing unless it so happens that plays are produced with parts suitable to his capabilities. Few actors have made a more striking impression than Mr. Ferdinand Gottschalk as Lord Tweenwayes in The Amazons and Johnny Trotter, who was "no dodo bird" in The Climbers. But for months past he has had nothing but small parts in plays that have been failures.

His last venture, in Rupert Hughes' The Triangle, promised to mark a turning point in his career, for it gave him an opportunity for acting that was essentially tragic and yet lay well within his scope. His part was, as usual, that of an absurdly foppish and degenerate little man, Willie Enslee, a member of an old New York family. Discovering that his wife is unfaithful to him, Enslee lashes himself into a fury which ends in his killing her with a knife, and then falling into a fit of abject fear at what he has done. Mr. Gottschalk played the part with his unfailing ability, touching out the grotesque phases with his familiar humor, and rising to a really imaginative effect of horror at the close. If the actress who played the opposite part had been equal to it, there is little doubt that Mr. Gottschalk would have made a profound impression. But Miss Charlotte Walker, delightful as she is to look at, and competent in portraying the softer feminine moods, was quite unequal to the tragic climax of the play, which requires the authority and skill of Mrs. Fiske or Mrs. Patrick Campbell. So, again, Mr. Gottschalk is waiting.

Napoleon and the Fairies

THE largeness and boldness of Mr. Charles Frohman's theatrical ambitions have led his enemies to dub him the Napoleon of the Drama; but to those who know him intimately (and, owing to his retiring disposition, these are so few that you could count them on the fingers of one hand) he is said to be sympathetic and quietly genial. About the last play any one would have expected him to like is Barrie's fairy phantasy, Peter Pan; but his devotion to it amounts almost to a passion.

The theatrical reporter of one of the great New York dailies happens to be of a similar mind, and in his trips up and down Broadway in search of news seldom fails to stop in at the Empire for at least an act. Now Mr. Frohman's modesty is such that he never takes a seat where he can be seen by the audience, so as it happened the two encountered each other almost nightly in the stamping ground of the standee. When Barrie's Pantaloon and Alice Sit-by-the-Fire were produced the reporter transferred his allegiance for one night, and so did the dramatic Napoleon. Mr. Frohman smiled, and for the first time addressed the reporter.

"Where were you last Wednesday?" he inquired. "I missed you at Peter Pan."

The Verdant Girardot

AFTER the first run of Charley's Aunt, Etienne Girardot was looking for a new vehicle, and, reasoning after the manner of player folk, he determined to get a second piece that was exactly the same. Like many another comedian who has made a continent roar, he is in private life one of the most earnest and intent of men. While lunching at The Players, where he lives while in New York, he once fell in with a young writer who has a round face, big round spectacles, a small nose and long hair

"Do you know," said Girardot, eyeing him fixedly, "you remind me of somebody—somebody I am very much interested in—and for the life of me I can't tell who it is."

The scribe smiled. "Willard Metcalf over there," he said, pointing to the painter, "always calls me Makepeace because I remind him of Thackeray."

Girardot reflected. "No!" he said, "it isn't Thackeray. I must say I don't see any likeness there. Isn't there any one else you resemble?"

"Iranaeus Stevenson, the musical critic, says I'm the living image of Anton Seidl."

"It's not Seidl," said Girardot. "How extraordinary! I seem to have seen the man only yesterday, and yet I can't remember where!" He fell into an abstracted silence, and the conversation about the table drifted into other channels. Some minutes later Girardot's face lighted up, and raising his hand to command silence he exclaimed, "I have it! I've got it! You're the living image of Verdant Green!"

There was a roar of laughter, and Girardot looked nonplused.

"What have I said?" the comedian asked. "I mean it—seriously. And I want to ask you—don't you think if Verdant Green were dramatized it would make me just the play I'm after?"

Nothing came of the idea, but when Mr. Hopkinson was produced some months ago, one of the critics proclaimed it as the best farce since Charley's Aunt, and the phrase was quoted on all the bill-boards. Girardot took advantage of this windfall of advertisement to revive that classic, thus achieving his ideal as to the successor of his first triumph.

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Cure your wife of bargain-shopping and you will have more money for bucket-shopping.

Remember that your wife's wardrobe is the Bradstreet in which women look for your rating.

Chester Field, Jr.

Not Running Amuck

A NEWSPAPER editor in a certain Western town was expressing his pleasure over the latest exposure.

"Oh, it's fine the way newspapers are showing up all the dark places—fine—fine!" he exclaimed to a friend at lunch.

"I sincerely hope that when they've finished with secret rebates, beef trust, insurance and Standard Oil," replied the latter, "that they'll finish the job by exposing the newspaper business."

"So do I!" assented the editor instantly. "So do I! Why, here's our rival, the Citizen, right in this town. Its building stands on school land for which it pays one-fourth the rent anybody else pays, because it's the Citizen. It gets its fire insurance cheaper than anybody else, and gas, and water. Why? Simply because it's the Citizen."

"Have you facts?"

"Facts that would convict in court."

"Well, why don't you go ahead with an exposure on your own account? It ought to be right in your line."

"Oh, fudge—we're on school land, too!"

Puts and Calls

Natural History

Ah, here's a simple truth you may
Rely upon, my friend:
A mule's headquarters, as they say,
Are not his "business" end

Sand in His Eyes

'Tis hardest, preachers all declare,
Of all the sheep that stray,
To make the cheating grocer see
The error of his weigh.

What's the Use?

Shrouds have no pockets! If they had
They'd be quite empty, we're afraid,
Ere all the doctor's bills—how sad!—
And undertaker's claims were paid.

Overdoing It

It is wise to provide for the dark, rainy day
Of which prudent people persistently tell us,
But bad as improvident spenders are they
Who waste all their lives in collecting umbrellas.

Inner Truths

A sea trip nearly always brings
Rare memories to treasure,
Unless too many sorry things
Come up to mar one's pleasure

—*Nixon Waterman*

A Long Weight

SENATOR ANKENY, of Washington, is an enthusiastic fisherman. Senator Piles tells the following story on him:

When Senator Ankeny became a proud grandfather there was an immediate call for scales to weigh the infant. No other scales being available, it was decided to use grandpa's fish-scales. So these were brought forth, and the surprise of those present was unbounded when it was found the little baby, but a few hours old, weighed twenty pounds.

"Break the Railroads' Throttling Grip"

BREAK THE RAILROADS THROTTLING GRIP
The BUSINESS MAN'S MAGAZINE
BOOKKEEPER PUBLISHING CO

Beginning with the June Number, the Business Man's Magazine will inaugurate a relentless campaign in the interest of every man who buys a mile of transportation or ships a pound of freight.

A series of twelve articles by Hon. Charles E. Townsend, Congressman from Michigan, will give conclusive proof of existing railroad abuses, hitherto unpublished, and point the moral of logical remedy, and the means of its accomplishment.

Read the June Number of the

Business Man's Magazine

The demurrage evil; the purpose and manipulation of the artificial car famine; the abuse of the private car system, the delay of perishable freight that means destruction; the rank injustice of discriminating charges for identical transportation service—all will be shown as they really are, and as they never were shown before.

The Business Man's Magazine has declared a righteous war for equity in freight rates and no rebate—for a flat two cent mileage tariff and no subterfuge. The opening gun will be fired in the June number. It is the duty of every citizen to himself and his fellow man, to read this startling revelation of monopolistic wrong, and help apply the remedy that will be pointed out.

THE BUSINESS MAN'S MAGAZINE, Detroit, Mich.

10 Cents a Copy at all Newsdealers *$1.00 a Year of the Publishers*

There's MONEY in Smoke

THE Peck-Williamson Underfeed Furnace will save you the money wasted and lost in the smoke and gases which escape up and out your chimney from that old overfeed furnace. It will extract more heat from a ton of the cheapest grade coal than you have ever obtained from a ton of the highest grade. Satisfied users from all sections give voluntary testimony that the

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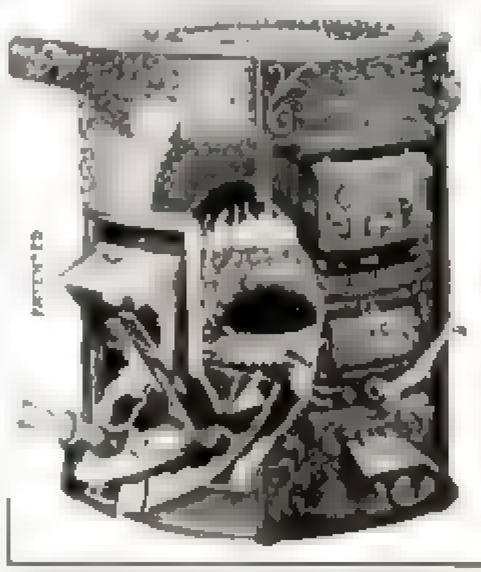
Saves ½ to ⅔ on Coal Bills



Several months ago we published a letter from Mr. Howard [illegible], Fort Wayne, Ind., telling his experience. A gentleman from Virginia recently wrote Mr. [illegible], asking further information. Extracts from his reply follow:

"I am pleased to state that I am pleased with the Peck-Williamson Underfeed Furnace and consider it the most economical furnace on the market. [illegible] $8.00 [illegible] $2.25 [illegible] $22 [illegible] $5 [illegible]

[illegible] $15.00 [illegible] and $15.00 for wood, making $47.00 for [illegible] only heating three rooms."

[illegible] much cheaper than it is [illegible] cases, the saving would be [illegible] letters.

[illegible] giving full description of [illegible] satisfied users. Heating plans [illegible] of our Engineering Department are at your command [illegible]. Write to-day and please give name of local dealer with [illegible].

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The B.V.D. [illegible] every garment of B.V.D. [illegible]

ERLANGER BROS., [illegible] Franklin St., New York

ODDITIES & NOVELTIES

Of Every-Day Science

HIGH-PRICED ANGEL CAKES – Uncle Sam is Baking Them Right Along at $25,000 a Cake.

THERE is a sort of angel food which Treasury experts are highly skilled in preparing. It is made, appropriately enough, of gold, or of silver, and has to be baked in an oven for eight hours before it is properly cooked. You may see it in process of manufacture at any time in any of the mints or assay offices. It looks just like angel cake, and the chef in charge will tell you that each cake of gold is worth about $25,000, and that the silver ones are valued at $600 apiece.

These cakes, which are twelve inches in diameter and three inches thick, are of gold, or of silver, so pure as to contain hardly so much as a thousandth part of any foreign substance. Their material is the product of scientific refining—which, in the case of the silver, is accomplished by putting the crude stuff, as it comes from the mine or from the dealer in old metal, into boiling nitric acid. The silver, treated in this way, instantly disappears, the acid looking like so much water, but the addition of a little common salt, later, causes it to fall to the bottom of the tank in a fine white powder. When the acid has been drawn off, the powder, which is chloride of silver, is moulded under pressure into such cakes as those above described.

It is the same way with the gold, after it has gone through similar processes. Freed from all impurities, it looks like nothing so much as red gravel of fine texture. If one saw a heap of it by the roadside, one would not, even after close examination, think it worth while to carry off a pailful. Moulded under hydraulic pressure, however, it makes very pretty cakes, which, like the silver ones, are baked for several hours to get rid of the trifling amount of water they still contain.

The assay offices and mints will buy old gold and silver from anybody, in lots worth not less than $100, and, odd though it may seem, the raw material for our coins is obtained largely from the thousands of dealers in second-hand precious metals who are scattered over the country. It is wonderful how all the old scraps of such stuff, even to spectacle rims, are gathered up eventually and utilized. The case of the watch you are now wearing will almost surely find its way into one of these Government workshops, and if you have a tooth pulled, you may be certain that the gold filling it contains will be extracted by the dentist and sold to Uncle Sam.

WORK FOR THE WARDENS – How the Smellers-out of Game Go About Their Tasks.

THE business of detecting violations of the laws which forbid the shipping of game from one State to another calls for much cleverness and ingenuity on the part of the officials known as "wardens," some of whom employ hunting-dogs to help them. It is said that such dogs can be trained to "point" dead birds in a box as accurately as live ones in a bush.

Much of the game thus unlawfully shipped is packed in trunks, the better to evade suspicion. But a warden who understands his work can detect the cheat by methods of his own. In the first place, game is heavy, but a trunk filled with it does not "feel" like a trunk full of books. In most instances, by lifting and then shaking the trunk, the officer is able to be reasonably sure.

During the last twenty years, in thirty States of the Union, the total volume of bird life has decreased about fifty per cent. Obviously, then, if we are to hope to have any birds at all in the future, it is important that some effective measures should be taken for their protection. The development of the great railroad systems and the perfecting of cold-storage facilities for shipping game to market have had a tendency to increase largely the number of birds annually killed. Game is often kept nowadays from one season to another, and, up to the time of the passage of restrictive laws, it was forwarded in enormous quantities from all parts of the United States to supply the great centres of population.

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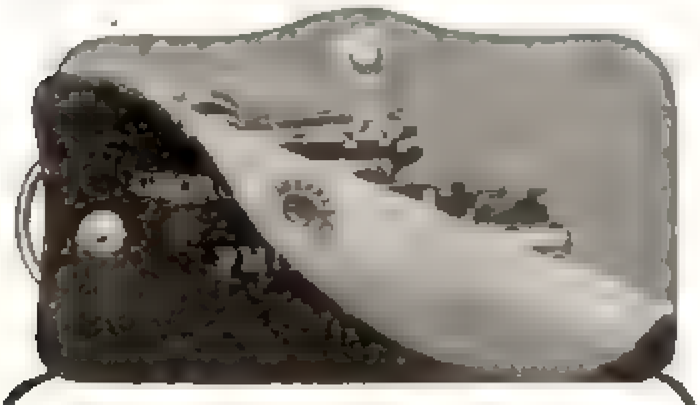

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Something **actually long needed—a purse for keys**. [illegible] the keys in neat, compact form, avoids their cutting [illegible] articles in the pocket, **prevents keys rusting** and **saves the wear and tear on trousers and pockets**.

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The HOPKINS & ALLEN Double Action, Self Cocking, solid frame revolver is a dependable and well-made arm. It has a safety rebounding hammer which is always on the safety or rebounding notch when not being fired.

The hammer cannot touch or reach the cartridge unless the trigger is pulled. It can be used as a single action or target revolver by pulling the hammer back with the finger to full cock, and then pulling the trigger in the same way as a double action revolver or self cocker. The frame is made of solid steel beautifully nickel plated and has a rubber stock or handle of neat design.

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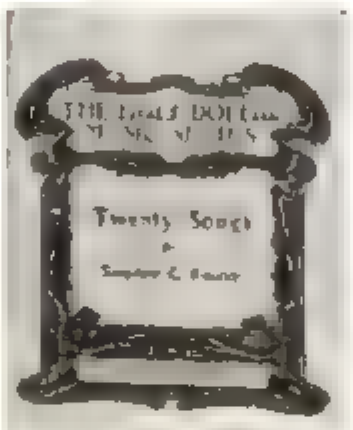

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Edited by N. CLIFFORD PAGE

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[illegible] the twenty best known songs [illegible] American folk [illegible] chorus but, if desired, the songs may be sung throughout by a solo voice. The accompaniments, which in [illegible] composition, have been carefully revised by the editor [illegible] modern piano.

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$5.00 [illegible] Permanently Cures Spavin, Thoroughpin, Ringbone [illegible] Curb, Splint, Capped Hock, Windpuff, Shoe Boil, Injured Tendons and all Lameness. [illegible] Troy Chemical Company, Binghamton, N. Y.

A CORNER ON HEAVEN

IN THE desert not far from Bagdad, the city whose name will always be familiar as the home of Sinbad and Aladdin, is the little village of Samarra, perched high upon the ruins of its former glory. Samarra is no longer famous because of its beauty and its size; it is little more than a collection of mud huts, yet it enjoys the distinction of counting among its inhabitants the greatest monopolist in the world. For years this crafty old Moslem priest, Abdullah by name, has sold building-lots and standing-room in Paradise to the faithful. His stock is unlimited, and to all who apply and are able to pay the price he presents an imposing deed describing the little portion of Heaven to which the purchaser shall be entitled.

Priest Abdullah has no need to advertise his wares, for his fame is spread far and wide throughout the desert by the thousands of pilgrims who march annually to the sacred cities of Kerbela, Nejef and Mecca. Five Turkish liras, or twenty-two dollars, might purchase a corner lot; a poorer man might secure standing-room for one foot, or even for both, for a much smaller sum.

The story is told, and believed among the Moslems, that a few years ago, when the trade in heavenly real estate was at its height, Ali, an influential Arab, aware of how the poor were being robbed of the little which they had, or seeing a deal which might result advantageously for himself, approached the priest with an offer to purchase the entire part of the future world known as Hades. The curiosity of the priest, who wondered how any one could desire to purchase any part of the pit of eternal fire, was overcome by the unusual offer of ten liras or forty-four dollars. The transaction was therefore readily completed, and the deed conveying Hades to Ali was drawn up, witnessed, signed and impressively sealed. The proprietor of Hades withdrew with his deed. He had hardly left the presence of the priest when he met a party of pilgrims climbing the mound upon which the village is perched.

"Whither?" asked the owner of Hades.

"To the priest's house."

"Why?" he asked.

"To buy for us a place in Paradise."

"It is no longer necessary," volunteered the speculator.

"Why?" asked the astonished pilgrims.

"You must go to Paradise, for I have purchased Hades, and I will not admit you there. There is no place but Paradise left for you."

Finally, after a long conference and further explanations, the band of pilgrims, rejoicing that they might taste of the pleasures of Paradise without parting from the little money which they possessed, retraced their steps down the hill. The priest had lost a number of customers.

The report that Ali had purchased Hades spread throughout the desert with amazing rapidity. No longer was it necessary to obtain entrance to Paradise, for now all must go there. Visitors to the house of Abdullah became fewer, and the priest was alarmed, for his source of revenue was rapidly diminishing. His daily sales were few, and finally they ceased altogether. As a last resort he sought Ali, the possessor of the deed of Hades, and offered to repurchase it.

"I will give you fifty liras," he said.

"Fifty thousand," interrupted Ali.

At the mention of this vast sum Abdullah gasped. However, a price had been mentioned, and in the land of bargaining there was hope that he might regain the Hades which he had so carelessly rejected. It was a long, hard bargain that the two drove that day. The hours of the morning and afternoon wore away, and, save for brief periods when Abdullah paused to pray, the wrangling continued. It was only when the sun was sinking beneath the desert horizon that a conclusion was reached. Hades, which had been sold for ten liras, reverted to the original owner for twenty-five thousand.

Once more it was announced to the passing pilgrims that building-lots and standing-room in Paradise were for sale at the old stand. It was explained that Celestial real estate had increased in value on account of an unsuccessful attempt of a syndicate to secure a monopoly of Hades, yet the prices, if slightly advanced, were so low that all profits were eliminated.

— *Edgar James Banks.*

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Develops compressed air in large volume under heavy pressure, for heavy cleaning, and a vacuum for suction cleaning and carrying off the dirt. There is no dust sent flying about the building. The dirt and disease germs are removed — carried away by our vacuum suction.

STATIONARY PLANTS for private residences, country homes and the like for $350.00 and up. Electric power from the lighting current may be used. It is inexpensive, dustless, and the maid can operate it more easily and effectively than broom-sweeping. This plant is sold complete with motor, air compressor and all tools necessary for cleaning a house perfectly. The "dustless method" removes all the dust and disease germs from the house, renovates and disinfects the carpets, furniture, draperies, decorations, ceilings and walls. It does this without taking up carpets or removing the furniture. House cleaning does not disturb the household and the work is done in one fourth the time it can be accomplished by any other method. Write for full description and estimate. State size of house.

PRIVATE PLANTS for Office Buildings, Hotels, Theatres and Department Stores. These plants use compressed air and vacuum combined or separately, [illegible] complete, ready for installation with all the tools necessary for [illegible] carpets, wood or marble floors. The tools are easy to operate and do not require [illegible] The plants are inexpensive to install and will save their entire cost the first year. We also manufacture gasoline engines, air compressors and compressed air water lifts.

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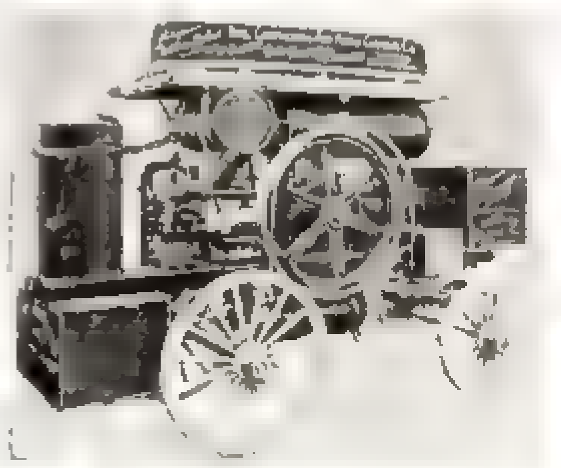

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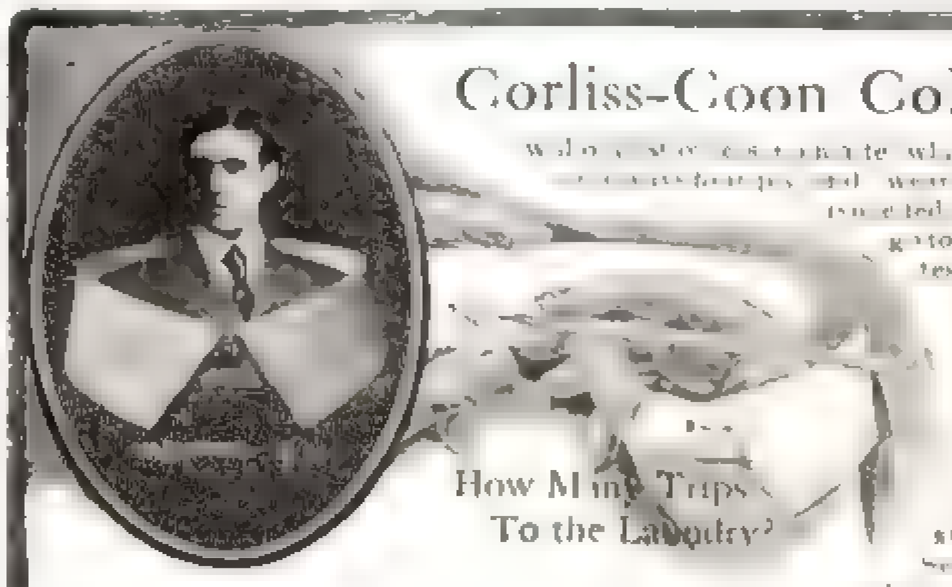

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MORTMAIN

(Continued from Page 5)

Leach, was discharged two days ago and a general alarm has been sent out for him."

"This is terrible," groaned Sir Richard in horror.

"It is, indeed. I thought you ought to know. I may see you at the opera. If not—good-night."

The receiver fell from the baronet's fingers and the room grew black as he clutched at the mantel with his other hand. He staggered slightly, tried to regain his equilibrium and struck one of the bronze dragon vases which grinned down upon him.

The vase rocked and fell, while the baronet clutched at it in its descent. It was too late. The heavy vase crashed downward to the floor carrying Sir Richard with it, and one of the verdigris-covered dragon's fangs crushed through his right hand.

Mortmain uttered a groan and lay motionless upon the floor. The little Sèvres clock ticked off forty seconds and then softly chimed the quarter, while the blood from the baronet's hand spurted in a tiny stream upon the rug.

III

WHEN Sir Richard Mortmain next opened his eyes after his fall he found himself in his bedchamber. The curtains were tightly drawn, allowing only a shimmer of sunshine to creep in and play upon the ceiling; an unknown woman in a nurse's uniform was sitting motionless at the foot of his bed; the air was heavy with the pungent odor of iodoform, and his right arm, tightly bandaged and lying extended upon a wooden support before him, throbbed with burning pains. Too weak to move, unable to recall what had brought him to such a pass, he raised his eyebrows inquiringly, and in reply the nurse laid her finger upon her lips and reaching toward a stand beside the bed held a tumbler containing a glass tube to the baronet's lips. Mortmain sucked the contents from the tumbler and felt his pulse strengthen—then weakness manifested itself and he sank back, his lips framing the unspoken question: "What has happened?"

The nurse smiled—she was a pretty, plump young person—not the kind Sir Richard favored (Burne Jones as his type), and whispered:

"You have been unconscious nearly twelve hours. You must lie still. You have had a bad fall and your hand is injured."

In some strange and unaccountable way the statement called to Mortmain's fuddled senses a confused recollection of a scene in Sudermann's "Die Versunkene Glöcke," and half-unconsciously he repeated the words:

"I *fell.* I—fe l—l!"

"Yes, you did, indeed!" retorted the pretty nurse. "But Sir Penniston will never forgive me if I let you talk. How is your arm?"

"It burns—and burns!" answered the baronet.

"That horrid vase crushed right through the palm. Rather a nasty wound. But you will be all right presently. Do you wish anything?"

Suddenly complete mental capacity rushed back to him. The disagreeable scene with Flaggs, the finding of the notes, the news of Russell's murder, and his accident. The murder! He must learn the details. And the notes. What had he done with them? He could not recollect, try hard as he would. Were they on the table? His head whirled and he grew suddenly faint. The nurse poured out another tumbler from a bottle and again held the tube to his lips. How delicious and strengthening it was!

"Please get me a newspaper!" said Sir Richard.

"A newspaper!" cried the nurse. "Nonsense. I'll do no such thing!"

"Then please see if there are some papers in an envelope lying on the writing-table in my private study."

The nurse seemed puzzled. Where aristocratic patients were concerned, particularly if they were in a weakened condition, she was accustomed to accommodate them. She hesitated.

"At once!" added Sir Richard.

The nurse tiptoed out of the room and in the course of a few moments returned.

"The butler says that Mr. Flynt's clerk, a man named Faggs, or Flaggs, or something of the sort, came back for them half an hour ago. He explained that he thought Mr. Flynt might have left some papers by mistake, and the butler supposed it was all right and let him have them. The name of your solicitors was upon the envelope."

Sir Richard stared at her stupidly. A queer feeling of horror and distrust pervaded him, the very same feeling which his first sight of the clerk had inspired in him. What could Flaggs have known of the notes? The clerk himself could not have committed the ghastly deed, since he had been under arrest at the time—but might he not have been an accomplice? Were the notes part of some terrible plot to enmesh *him,* Sir Richard Mortmain, in the murder? Was it a scheme of blackmail? The blood surged to his head and dimmed his eyesight. But why had Flaggs taken them away? Had he left them on the street hoping that Sir Richard would find them and bring them into the house, so that he could testify to having found them in the study? But, if so, why had he risked the possibility of their having been destroyed before he could regain them? Clearly, such a supposition was impossible. It must have been merely chance. The fellow had probably sneaked in simply to see what he could find. And what had he found! A shiver of terror quenched for an instant the burning of Mortmain's body. A horrible vision of himself standing outside the window of Lord Gordon Russell took shape before him. What if people should say ——! He had been heard by Joyce and the clerk to express his hatred of the old man and his willingness to kill him. In addition there were the notes, overdue and about to be protested, which Flaggs had found in his study within twelve hours of Lord Russell's murder. Motive enough for any crime. Moreover, the policeman had seen him loitering there at almost the exact moment of the homicide!

These momentous facts came crushing down upon his brain with the weight of stones, numbing for an instant his exquisite torture—then reason reasserted herself. Lord Russell was dead. If circumstances seemed to point in his direction, he had only to deny that the notes had been in his possession, and certainly a peer's word would be taken as against that of the drunken clerk of a solicitor. Moreover, the notes were obviously not in the possession of the executors. Should by any chance no memoranda of them remain he might never be called upon to honor them. At all events, his bankruptcy had, for the time at least, been averted. Even were their existence known, legal procedure would intervene to give him time to evolve some means of escape—perhaps, in default of aught else, a marriage of convenience. Sir Richard, in spite of the burning pain in his right arm, leaned back his head with a sensation of relief.

A soft knock came at the door and he heard the nurse's voice murmuring in low tones; then the curtain was partially raised and he recognized the figures of Sir Penniston Crisp and his young assistant.

"Ah, my dear Mortmain! When you left me yesterday morning I hardly expected to see you so soon again. And how do you find yourself?" was the baronet's cheery salutation.

Sir Richard smiled faintly.

"Rather a nasty wound," continued the surgeon. "Fickles, hand me those bandage scissors. Well, we must take a look at it." And he seated himself comfortably by the bedside.

Miss Fickles, who had elevated Sir Richard to a sitting posture, now handed Sir Penniston the scissors, and the great physician leisurely cut the bandage from the arm. Mortmain winced with pain and closed his eyes. For an instant the outer air soothed the burning palm and forearm, then the blood crept into the veins and the pain became a veritable torture.

"Hm!" remarked Sir Penniston. "I must open this up. It needs attending to."

He might well have said so, for the edges of the wound showed tinges of yellow and the hand itself was crushed pitifully.

"Scalscope, pass those instruments to Miss Fickles and open that bottle of somnichloride. I shall have to give you a whiff of anæsthetic, Mortmain. These little exploring expeditions are apt to be painful, however gentle we try to be. Just enough to make you a mere spectator—you will not lose consciousness. Wonderful, isn't it? I'm afraid I shall have to pick out some shivers of bone and trim off the edges a little. It will only take a moment or two. Then a nice bandage and you will be quite at ease."

While Jermyn was emptying Sir Penniston's bag of its heterogeneous contents, Miss Fickles boiled the surgeon's implements in a tray of water over a tiny electric stove and then arranged them in order upon a soft bed of padded cotton. Scalscope pulled a table to the bedside and laid out with military precision rolls of linen, absorbents, antiseptic gauze, scissors, tape, thread, needles, and finally the little bottle of somni-chloride. The nurse lowered Sir Richard back upon the pillow and quickly twisted a fresh towel into a cone.

"How science leaps onward," continued Sir Penniston, meditatively taking the cone in his left hand. "Anodyne, ether, chloroform, nitrous oxide, ethyl-chloride, and at last the greatest of all boons, somnichloride! And all within my lifetime—that is really the most extraordinary part of it. You were at the theatre yesterday morning. You observed how the patient, entirely conscious, felt no pain whatever. Ah, what are the miracles of art to the miracles of science? Think of being able at last, as you heard me announce, to feel sure of never permanently losing a limb!"

He allowed a single drop from the bottle to fall into the cone. Even as it descended it resolved itself into a lilac-colored volatile filling the cone like a horn of plenty. Sir Penniston held it with a smile just over Mortmain's head and suffered it to escape gently downward. At the first faint odor the baronet felt a perfect calm steal over his tired brain, at the second he seemed translated from his body and to be hovering above it, while retaining an almost supernatural acuteness of eye and ear. Of bodily pain he felt nothing. Then Crisp inverted the cone and poured out the lilac smoke in a faint iridescent cloud, which eddied round the baronet's head and filled his nostrils with the sweet fragrance of an old-fashioned garden. Its perfume almost smothered him, and for a moment his eyes were blurred as if he had inhaled a breath of strong ammonia. Then his sight cleared and he no longer smelt the flowers. The surgeon laid down the cone and took up a small, thin knife.

"Fickles, hold the wrist; you, Scalscope, the fingers. Thank you, that will do nicely."

Mortmain watched with fascinated interest as Sir Penniston applied the point to his palm. Then the surgeon suddenly raised his head and looked pityingly at Sir Richard. At the same moment the effect of the somni-chloride began to wear off and the baronet felt a throbbing in his hand. Jermyn also cast a glance of compassion at the patient, while Miss Fickles turned away her head as if unable to bear the sight of his suffering.

"My poor Mortmain," said the surgeon. "I fear you can never use this hand again."

Mortmain caught his breath and choked.

"What do you mean?" he gasped, and the effort sent a sharp pain through his lungs. "Not use my hand again?" His words sounded like the roar of a waterfall.

"I fear you cannot. It is an ugly-looking wound. I am sorry to say you will have to lose your hand. We shall be lucky if we can save the arm."

Mortmain felt an extraordinary pity for himself. He sobbed aloud. He had been vaguely aware that certain unfortunate persons in lowly circumstances occasionally lost their limbs. He was accustomed to contribute handsomely toward the homes for cripples and the blind, but he had never associated such an affliction with himself. He could not appreciate the proximity of it. There must be a mistake—or an alternative.

"No, no, no!" he exclaimed heavily. "Surely, you can restore my hand by treatment. I do not care how painful or tedious it may be. Why, I *must* have my hand. I have it now. Leave it as it is. I shall recover in time."

Sir Penniston smiled cheerfully.

"I am sorry," he repeated, and Mortmain fancied that he detected a gleam of exultation in his eye. "Nothing can save it. Gangrene has already set in. The verdigris of the vase has poisoned the flesh. Do you think I would trifle with you? That is not my business. Be a man. It is hard; true enough. But it might be much worse."

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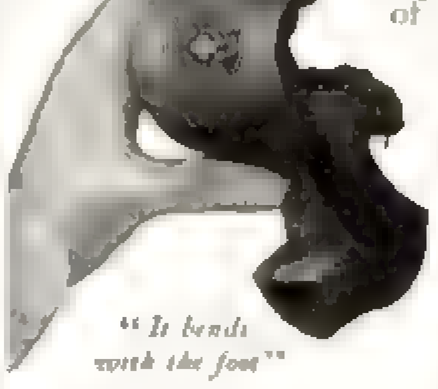

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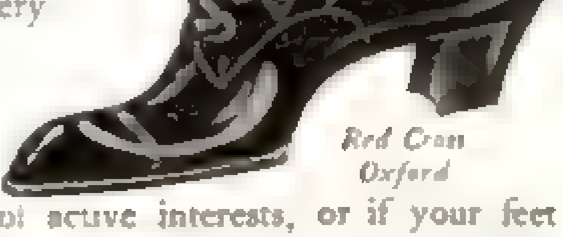

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"But my music!" cried Mortmain in agony. "I shall be a miserable cripple! A fellow with an empty sleeve or a stuffed hand in a glove! Horrible!" He groaned.

"You have still another," remarked the surgeon calmly. "Bind up this arm," he ordered, turning sharply to Jermyn. "Mortmain, I shall have to amputate your hand at the wrist within twelve hours. Do you desire a consultation? I assure you any physician would unhesitatingly give the same opinion. Still, if you desire——"

The room swam about him and for an instant the two surgeons seemed like two ogres hovering aloft with bloodthirsty faces glowering down at his helpless body.

Scalscope finished the bandage and tied the ends. Then he looked across at Crisp and remarked:

"How fortunate, Sir Penniston, that your experiments have been concluded in time to save Sir Richard. He will be the very first to benefit by your great discovery!"

Crisp smiled responsively.

"What is that?" cried Mortmain. "Save me? What do you mean?"

"Merely this, Mortmain. That if you are willing I may still give you a hand in place of this ruined one. It is possible, as I announced yesterday, to graft another in its place."

Mortmain stared stupidly at Sir Penniston. A great weight seemed stifling him.

"Did you really *mean* it?" he gasped.

"Precisely," returned the surgeon. "It will be difficult, but not particularly dangerous."

"Another's hand!" groaned the baronet.

"And why not?" eagerly continued the surgeon. "Surely some one will be found who can be induced for a proper consideration to assist in an operation that will restore to usefulness so distinguished a member of society."

"But is it *right?*" gasped Mortmain. "Is it lawful to maim a fellow-creature merely to serve one's self?" The idea disgusted him.

"As you please," remarked Crisp dryly. "If you are to avail yourself of this opportunity, which has never yet been offered to another, you must say so at once. If you are indifferent to the loss of your hand or distrust my skill, there is nothing left but to amputate and be done with it."

"It cannot be right!" moaned Mortmain. "I know it is a wicked thing."

"Right?" sneered Crisp. "Why, I almost believe that it would be a sin if I let this opportunity go by."

"What is that?" cried Miss Fickles sharply.

There was a sharp knock at the door and Ashley Flynt entered, with a strange look on his face. Like a flash it occurred to Mortmain that the solicitor had called to see him about the bankruptcy. He looked again, and a terrible thought possessed him that it was for something else that the lawyer had come. Was it about the murder? Was he already suspected? Apprehension dwarfed the horror of Sir Penniston's suggestion.

"Ah, Flynt," said the surgeon, "I am glad you have come. You can advise our friend here. I have offered to give him a new hand in place of the one which he must lose. He's afraid that it is unlawful. Come, give us an opinion!"

Flynt sank silently into an armchair and rested his finger-tips lightly together.

"Flynt," cried Mortmain, "what a terrible thing it is to deprive a fellow-creature of a limb. Is it legal? Is it not criminal?"

Flynt gazed fixedly at Sir Richard for a moment without replying.

"Situations sometimes arise," he remarked in a toneless voice, "where the results desired, even if they do not justify the means employed, at least render legal opinions superfluous."

"I do not understand you," groaned Mortmain. "Do you mean that what Sir Penniston proposes is a crime?"

"I mean that in a transaction of such moment the purely legal aspect of the case may be of slight importance."

"Exactly!" exclaimed Sir Penniston, whose face had assumed an expression of uneasiness. "To be sure! How plain he puts things, Mortmain. The law does not concern us when the integrity of the human body is involved."

"But if I require and insist upon your advice?" continued Mortmain. "You know that you are my solicitor."

"In a matter of this kind I should refuse to give an opinion in a specific case touching the interest of a client," returned Flynt.

"I must know the law!" cried the baronet.

"Very well," replied Flynt. "I have examined the statutes and find that a statute provides that the maiming of another (save where such maiming is necessary to preserve his life or health), even with his consent, is a felony. That is the law, if you must have it."

"Well, well," exclaimed Crisp. "There are so many laws that one can't help violating some of them every day. What an absurd statute! It only shows how ignorant our legislators used to be! I am sure there were no scientific men in Parliament. It is nonsensical."

Flynt gave a short laugh and arose.

"My dear Sir Richard," he remarked dryly, "this is entirely a matter for your own conscience and that of your physician. I trust that you will soon recover. I have an important engagement. I must beg you to excuse me."

"Gad, sir," cried Crisp, making a wry face toward the door as it closed behind the solicitor, "what a fellow that is! You might as well try to wring juice out of a paving stone. I feel quite irritated by him."

"If I consent," said Mortmain, "do you think you can find a proper person to—to——"

"My dear Mortmain," responded Sir Penniston eagerly, "leave that to us. You may be sure that we shall accept no hand that is not perfect in every way and adapted to your particular needs. You need give yourself not the slightest uneasiness upon that score, I assure you. Of course, you will have to pay for it, but I am convinced that in an affair of this kind a satisfactory adjustment can easily be made—say, two hundred pounds down and an annuity of fifty pounds. How does that strike you? Why, it would be a Godsend to many a poor fellow—say a clerk. He earns a beggarly five pounds a month. You give him two hundred pounds and as much a year for doing nothing as he was earning working ten hours a day."

The pains in Mortmain's hand had begun again with renewed intensity and his whole arm throbbed in response. He felt excited and feverish, and his thoughts no longer came with the same clearness and consecutiveness as before. It was evident to him that Crisp's diagnosis was correct. But shocking as was the realization that he, who had been in the prime of health but a few hours before, must now undergo a major operation, it was as nothing compared with the moral difficulty in which he found himself. All his inherited tendencies drew him back from a violation of the law, particularly a violation which included the maiming of a fellow-being; and so, for that matter, did all his acquired tastes and characteristics. On the other hand, his confidence in Crisp's skill and knowledge was such that he never for an instant doubted his ability successfully to achieve that which he had proposed.

"But the law! The law!" cried Mortmain in a last and almost pathetic effort to oppose that which he now in reality desired.

Crisp laughed almost sneeringly.

"What is the law? The law is for the general good, not the individual. Are we to follow it blindly when to do so would be suicidal? Bah! The law never dares transgress the sacred circle of a physician's discretion."

"I suppose that is quite true!" exclaimed Sir Richard faintly. "I leave it to you. Do as you think best. I will follow your instructions. But I am suffering. My hand tortures me horribly. Let us have it over with as soon as possible. How soon can you make your arrangements?"

"By this afternoon, Sir Richard."

Mortmain sank back. In his eagerness he had half raised himself from the pillow, and now a sensation of nausea accompanied by dizziness took possession of him. He saw things dimly and in distorted forms. There was a strange roaring in his head as of a multitude of waters and he perceived that Crisp and Jermyn were talking eagerly together. He caught disconnected words muttered hurriedly in low tones. They moved slowly toward the door and he distinctly heard Crisp say as they passed out:

"Yes, Flaggs is the very man!"

The words filled him with a nameless terror.

"Stop!" he cried, "stop! I will have nothing to do with that man—do you hear? Stop! Come back!" But the door closed, and Mortmain, helpless and trembling, again fell back and shut his eyes.

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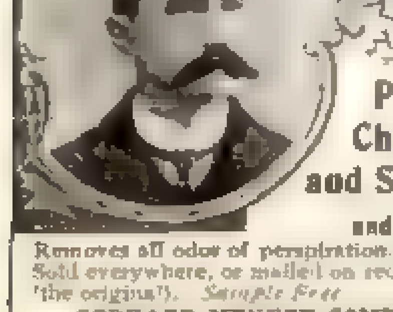

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SHOP TALK

Every Dog has His Tree

AS A BOY I remember my mother was fond of telling the following story:

An old Southern darky of ante-bellum days appeared before his master in a most wretched and dilapidated condition.

"What's the matter, Pompey?" inquired his master.

"Oh, Mars' John, I's done had a awful time. I done took a shot at a big bear and he jes' came right along after me, took my gun away and broke it up to nuffin'. Den I clumb a tree and de dog he done clumb a tree, and——" Here his master broke in with, "Why, you old liar; Pompey, no dog could climb a tree!" Pompey answered, "Why, Mars' John, de dog done had to climb de tree."

Fifteen years after my first recollection of this story I was in one of the smaller cities on the Mississippi Valley, twelve hundred miles from home, a stranger out with a heavy sample case, starting to call on my first customer. My goods were new to me, I'd never sold a bill before, and I guess I was about as green as they make 'em.

After calling on every jobber in town and being turned down with great regularity, I went back to the hotel to hold council with myself. There I was, with not a soul I knew, thus far a failure for a new house and "skunked" in my first town. Worse yet, it was my first day. Suddenly the old story came to me, and I immediately decided that it was up to this dog to climb his tree

I went back to the best jobber I'd seen in the morning and asked him what he was in the habit of getting for goods such as I had from the retail trade. He told me. "But why?" he asked.

"I'm going to sell some," I replied.

"I tell you they won't sell," he answered. That afternoon I spent tramping the streets and by night I'd gathered together a good bunch of orders. It was a very different boy who again presented himself to Mr. Jobber. "Well," said he, "I'll just fill those orders for you, young man."

"Not much," I replied. I was up the tree and safe. "If you want those orders you must double them at the least."

When I finally closed with him it was for four times the amount of my sales.

I never have been in the same fix or the same place since, but neither have I forgotten that every dog can climb his tree when he has to. —*R. T. B.*

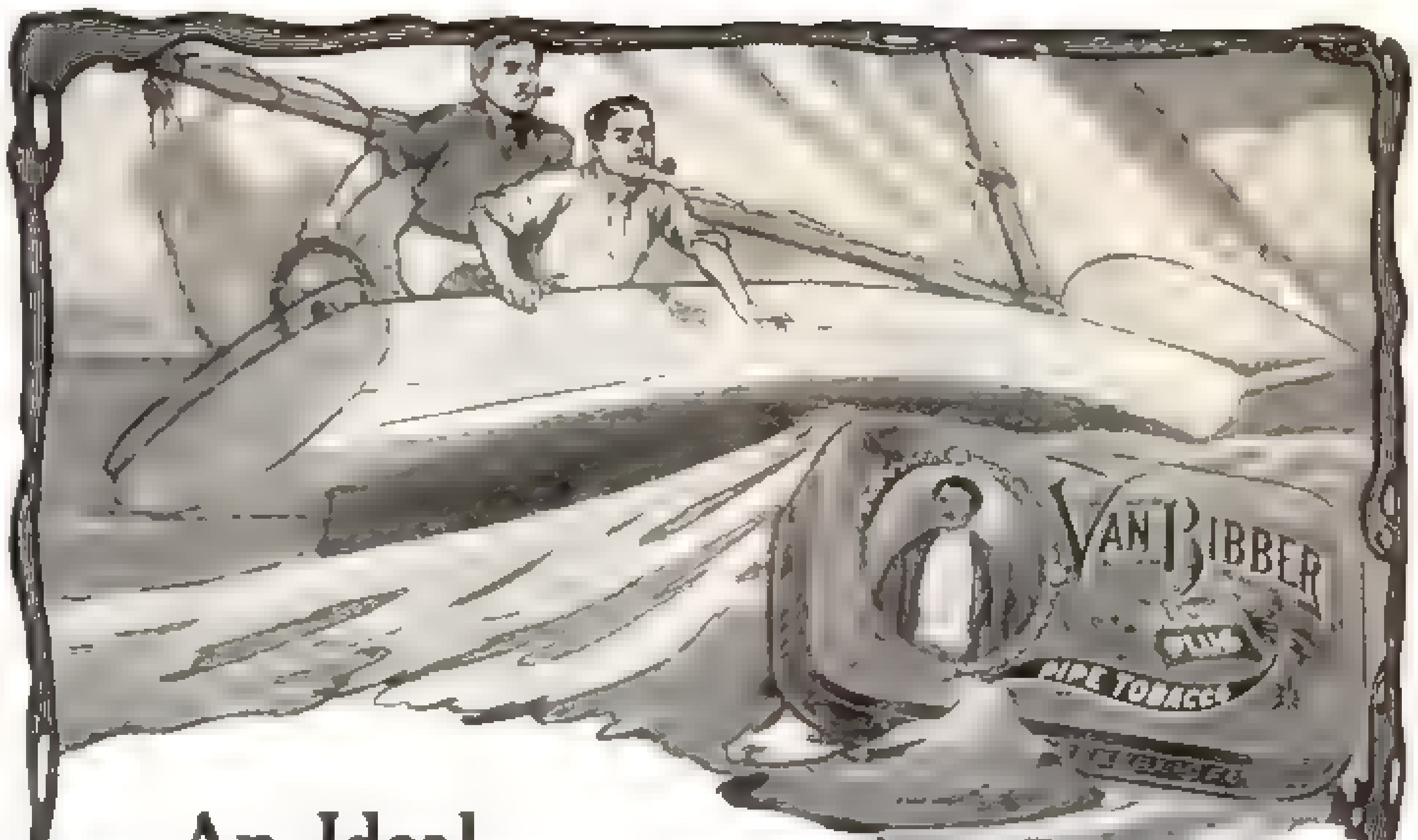
Other People's Money

MY FIRST and last experience of being accused of being a dishonest man taught me a lesson which I will never forget.

A few months after leaving a technical college I was offered the position of assistant engineer of construction with a large steel plant in the East. I accepted the position because the chief engineer had been one of my closest friends for many years. On the first pay-day the chief engineer was very busy superintending some construction work about one mile from the paymaster's office, so he asked me to draw his month's wages for him. This I did, receiving a small yellow envelope filled with gold pieces, the amount of which I did not know. I took the money straight to the engineer and he immediately opened the envelope, counted each piece, and found he was five dollars short. Naturally, suspicion was placed on me as having taken the five dollars, so I offered to give him the amount until I could see the paymaster, for I knew the money had been counted wrongly in the first place. This offer the engineer refused. Next, I went to the paymaster and explained the matter; but he declined to do anything, with the excuse that he had worked for twenty years for the company in his present capacity and had never made a mistake. After several days I went to an official of the company, who finally persuaded the paymaster to check over his accounts, and one month later I was notified that the books showed five dollars too much.

Thus was I taught to receive no other man's money, and that even those in the highest positions are liable to mistakes.

—*A. L. A., Jr.*



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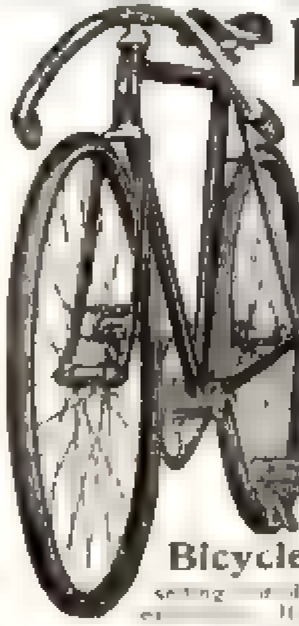

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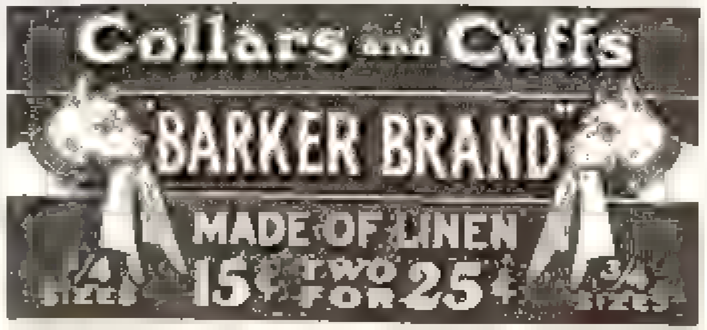

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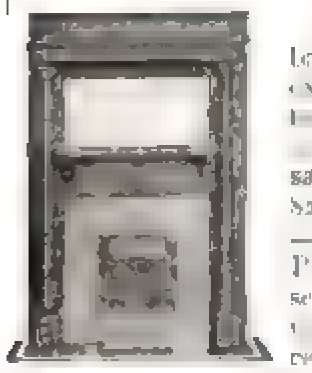

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THE FIGHTING CHANCE

(Continued from Page 18)

"I think not. But it was too much responsibility for me."

"I see. Any time I wish to break my neck I am to please do it alone in future."

"Exactly—if you don't mind," he said, smiling

They turned, shoulder to shoulder, and walked back through the drenched herbage.

"*That*," she said impulsively, "is not what *I* said a few moments ago to a woman."

"What did you say a few moments ago to a woman?"

"I said, Mr. Siward, that I would not leave a—a certain man to go to the devil alone!"

"Do you know any man who is going to the devil?"

"Do you?" she asked, letting herself go swinging out upon a tide of intimacy she had never dreamed of risking—nor had she the slightest idea whither the current would carry her.

They had stopped on the lawn, ankle-deep in wet grass, the stars overhead sparkling magnificently, and in their ears the outcrash of the sea.

"You mean me," he concluded.

"Do I?"

He looked up into the lovely face; her eyes were very sweet, very clear—clear with excitement—but very friendly.

"Let us sit here on the steps a little while, will you?" she asked.

So he found a place beside her, one step lower, and she leaned forward, elbows on knees, rounded white chin in her palms, the starlight giving her bare arms and shoulders a marble lustre and tinting her eyes a deeper amethyst.

And now, innocently untethered, mission and all, she laid her heart quite bare—one chapter of it. And, like other women-errant who believe in the influence of their sex individually and collectively, she began wrong by telling him of her engagement—perhaps to emphasize her pure disinterestedness in a crusade for principle only. Which naturally dampened in him any nascent enthusiasm for being ministered to, and so preoccupied him that he turned deaf ears to some very sweet platitudes which might otherwise have impressed him as discoveries in philosophy.

Officially her creed was the fashionable one in town; privately she had her own religion, lacking some details truly enough, but shaped upon youthful notions of right and wrong. As she had not read very widely, she supposed that she had discovered this religion for herself; she was not aware that everybody else had passed that way.

And the ripened fruit of all this philosophy she helpfully dispensed for Siward's benefit as bearing directly on his case.

Had he not been immersed in the unexpected proposition of her impending matrimony, he might have been impressed, for the spell of her beauty counted something, and besides, he had recently formulated for himself a code of ethics, tinctured with Omar, and bearing some slight resemblance to her own discoveries in that dog-eared science.

So it was, when she was most eloquent, most earnestly inspired—nay, in the very middle of a plea for sweetness and light and simple living—that his reasonings found voice in the material comment:

"I never imagined *you* were engaged!"

"Is *that* what you have been thinking about?" she asked, innocently astonished.

"Yes. Why not? I never for one instant supposed——"

"But, Mr. Siward, why should you have concerned yourself with supposing anything? Why indulge in any speculation of *that* sort about *me!*"

"I don't know, but I didn't," he said.

"Of course you didn't; you'd known me for about three hours—there on the cliff——"

"But—Quarrier——!"

Over his youthful face a sullen shadow had fallen—flickering, not yet settled. He would not for anything on earth have talked freely to the woman destined to be Quarrier's wife. He had talked too much, anyway. Something in her, something about her had loosened his tongue. He had made a plain ass of himself—that was all—a garrulous ass. And truly it seemed that the girl beside him, even in the starlight, could follow and divine what he

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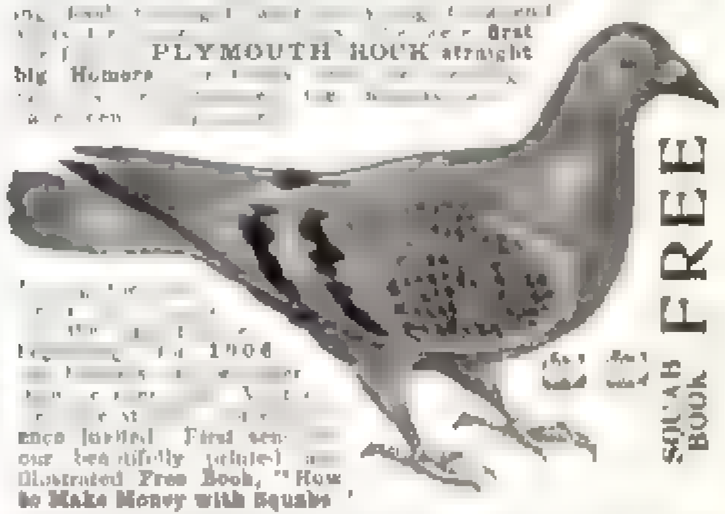

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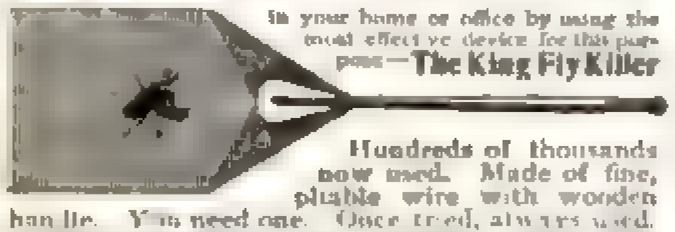

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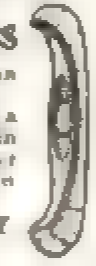

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had scarcely expressed to himself; or her instincts had taken a shorter cut to forestall his own conclusion.

"Don't think the things you *are* thinking!" she said in a fierce little voice, leaning toward him.

"What do you mean?" he asked, taken aback

"You know! Don't! It is unfair—it is—is faithless—to me. I *am* your friend; why not? Does it make any difference to you whom I marry? Cannot two people remain in accord anyway? Their friendship concerns one another and—nobody else!" She was letting herself go now; she was conscious of it, conscious that impulse and emotion were the currents unloosed and hurrying her onward. And with it all came exhilaration, a faint intoxication, a delicate delight in daring to let go all and trust to impulse and emotions.

"Why should you feel hurt because for a moment you let me see—gave me a glimpse of yourself—of life's battle as you foresee it? What if there is always a reaction from all confidences exchanged? What if that miserable French cynic did say that never was he more alone than after confessing to a friend? He died crazy, anyhow Is not a rare moment of confidence worth the reaction—the subsidence into the armored shell of self? Tell me truly, Mr. Siward, isn't it?"

Breathless, confused, exhilarated by her own rapid voice, she bent her face, brilliant with color, and very sweet; and he looked up into it, expectant, uncertain.

"If such a friendship as ours is to become worth anything to you—to me, why should it trouble you that I know—and am thinking of things that concern you? Is it because the confidence is one-sided? Is it because you have given and I have listened and given nothing in return to balance the account? I do give—interest, deep interest, sympathy if you ask it; I give confidence in return—if you desire it!"

"What can a girl like you need of sympathy?" he said, smiling.

"You don't know! You don't know! If heredity is a dark vista, and if you must stare through it all your life, sword in hand, always on your guard, do you think you are the only one?"

"Are *you*—one?" he said incredulously.

"Yes"—with an involuntary shudder—"not *that* way. It is easier for me; I think it is—I know it is. But there are things to combat—impulses, a recklessness, perhaps something almost ruthless. What else I do not know, for I have never experienced violent emotions of any sort—never even deep emotion."

"You are in love!"

"Yes, *thoroughly*," she added with conviction, "but not violently. I——" She hesitated, stopped short, leaning forward, peering at him through the dusk; and: "Mr. Siward! *are* you laughing?" She rose and he stood up instantly.

There was lightning in her darkening eyes now; in his something that glimmered and danced. She watched it, fascinated, then of a sudden the storm broke and they were both laughing convulsively, face to face there under the stars.

"Mr. Siward," she breathed, "I *don't* know what I am laughing at; do you? Is it at you? At myself? At my poor philosophy in shreds and tatters? Is it some infernal mirth that you seem to be able to kindle in me—for I never knew a man like you before?"

"You don't know what you were laughing at?" he repeated. "It was something about love——"

"No, I don't know why I laughed! I—I don't wish to, Mr. Siward. I do not desire to laugh at anything you have made me say—anything you may infer——"

"I don't infer——"

"You do! You made me say something—about my being ignorant of deep, of violent emotion, when I had just informed you that I am thoroughly, *thoroughly* in love——"

"Did I make you say all that, Miss Landis?"

"You did. Then you laughed and made me laugh, too. Then you——"

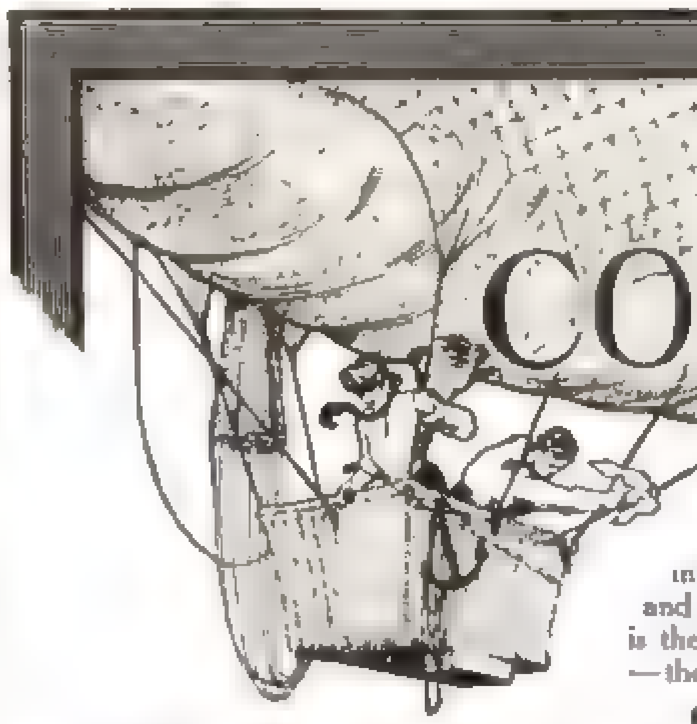
"What did I do then?" he asked, far too humbly.

"You—you infer that I am either not in love or incapable of it, or too ignorant of it to know what I'm talking about. That, Mr. Siward, is what you have done to me to-night."

"I—I'm sorry——"

"*Are* you?"

"I ought to be, anyway," he said.



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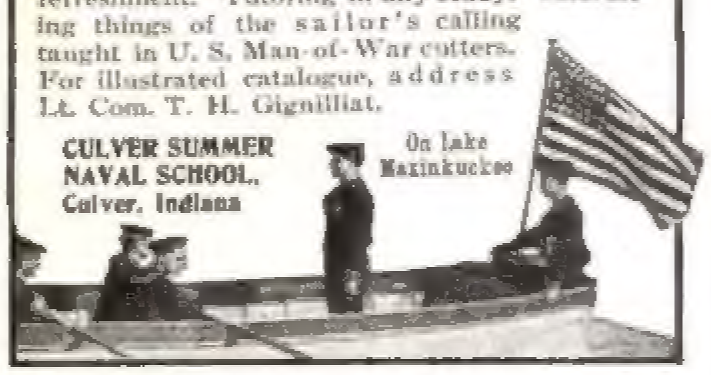

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It was unfortunate; an utterly inexcusable laughter seemed to bewitch them, hovering always close to his lips and hers.

"How *can* you laugh!" she said. "How *dare* you! I don't care for you nearly as violently as I did, Mr. Siward. A friendship between us would not be at all good for me. Things pass too swiftly—too intimately. There is too much mockery in you——" She ceased suddenly, watching the sombre alteration of his face; and, "*Have* I hurt you?" she asked penitently.

"No."

"Have I, Mr. Siward? I did not mean it." The attitude, the words, slackening to a trailing sweetness, and then the moment's silence, stirred him.

"I'm rather ignorant myself of violent emotion," he said. "I suspect normal people are. You know better than I do whether love is usually a sedative."

"Am I normal—after what I have confessed?" she asked. "Can't love be well-bred?"

"Perfectly, I should say—only perhaps you are not an expert——"

"In what?"

"In self-analysis, for example."

There was a vague meaning in the gaze they exchanged.

"As for our friendship, we'll do the best we can for it, no matter what occurs," he added, thinking of Quarrier—and, thinking of him, glanced up to see him within earshot and moving straight toward them from the veranda above.

There was a short silence; a tentative civil word from Siward; then Miss Landis took command of something that had a grotesque resemblance to a situation. A few minutes later they returned slowly to the house, the girl walking serenely between Siward and her preoccupied affianced.

"If your shoes are as wet as my skirts and slippers you had better change, Mr. Siward," she said, pausing at the foot of the staircase.

So he took his *congé*, leaving her standing there with Quarrier, and mounted to his room.

In the corridor he passed Ferrall, who had finished his business correspondence and was returning to the card-room.

"Here's a letter that Grace wants you to see," he said. "Read it before you turn in, Stephen."

"All right; but I'll be down later," replied Siward, passing on, the letter in his hand. Entering his room he kicked off his wet pumps and found dry ones; then moved about, whistling a gay air from some recent vaudeville, busy with rough towels and silken footgear, until, reshod and dry, he was ready to descend once more.

The encounter, the suddenly informal acquaintance with this young girl had stirred him agreeably, leaving a slight exhilaration. Even her engagement to Quarrier added a tinge of malice to his interests. Besides, he was young enough to feel the flattery of her concern for him—of her rebuke, of her imprudence, her generous emotional and childish philosophy.

Whistling under his breath the same gay, empty melody, he opened the top drawer of his dresser, dropped in his mother's letter, and locking the drawer, pocketed the key. He would have time enough to read the letter when he went to bed; he did not just now feel exactly like skimming through the fond, foolish sermon which he knew had been preached at him through his mother's favorite missionary, Grace Ferrall. What was the use of dragging in the sad old questions again—of repeating his assurances of good behavior, of reiterating his promises of moderation and watchfulness, of explaining his own self-confidence? Better that the letter await his bedtime—his prayers would be the sincerer the fresher the impression; for he was old-fashioned enough to say the prayers that an immature philosophy proved superfluous. For, he thought, if prayer is of any use, it takes only a few minutes to be on the safe side.

So he went downstairs leisurely, prepared to acquiesce in any suggestion from anybody, but rather hoping to saunter across Sylvia Landis' path before being committed.

She was standing beside the fire with Quarrier, one foot on the fender, apparently too preoccupied to notice him; so he strolled into the gun-room.

There were a few women there, and the majority of the men. Lord Alderdene, Major Belwether and Mortimer were at a table by themselves; stacks of ivory chips and five cards spread in the centre of the green explained the nature of their game;

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and Mortimer, raising his heavy, inflamed eyes and seeing Siward unoccupied, said wheezily: "Cut out that 'widow,' and give Siward his stack! Anything above two pairs for a jack triples the ante. Come on, Siward, there's a decent chap!"

So he seated himself for a sacrifice to the blind goddess balanced upon her winged wheel; and the cards ran high—so high that stacks dwindled or toppled within the half-hour, and Mortimer grew redder and redder, and Major Belwether blander and blander, and Alderdene's face wore a continual nervous snicker showing every white hound's tooth, and the ice in the tall glasses clinked ceaselessly.

It was late when Quarrier "sat in," with an expressionless acknowledgment of Siward's presence, and an emotionless raid upon his neighbor's resources with the first hand dealt in which he participated without drawing a card.

And always Siward, eyes on his cards, seemed to see Quarrier before him, his overmanicured fingers caressing his silky beard, the symmetrical pompadour, dark and thick as the winter fur on a rat, tufting his smooth, blank forehead.

It was very late when Siward first began to be aware of his increasing deafness, the difficulty, too, that he had in making people hear, the annoying contempt in Quarrier's womanlike eyes. He felt that he was making a fool of himself, very noiselessly somehow—but with more racket than he expected when he miscalculated the distance between his hand and a decanter.

It was time for him to go—unless he chose to ask Quarrier for an explanation of that sneer which he found distasteful. But there was too much noise, too much laughter.

Besides, he had a matter to attend to—the careful perusal of his mother's letter to Mrs. Ferrall.

Very white, he rose. After an indeterminate interval he found himself entering his room.

The letter was in the dresser; several things seemed to fall and break, but he got the letter, sank down on the bed's edge and strove to read—set his teeth grimly, forcing his blurred eyes to a focus. But he could make nothing of it—nor of his toilette either, nor of Ferrall, who came in on his way to bed, having noticed the lights still in full glare over the open transom, and who straightened out matters for the stunned man lying face downward across the bed, his mother's letter crushed in his nerveless hand.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

THE FIRE-EATERS

(Concluded from Page 7)

Menefee; and I am confident that you acted with the consent and approval of Messrs. Duncan and Bynum. These four gentlemen were just as responsible for the whole conduct of the affair as you and I, yet you and I alone were ever assailed for the '*barbarous three exchanges of shots.*' Now you and I know that there was really but one deliberate exchange of shots; the third time after each party, in turn—Cilley in his first shot and Graves in his second—had blundered in his fire, and they would not and could not leave the ground under the accidents which would have caused misapprehension and perhaps ridicule.

"There was no difficulty, dissension or complaint between you and myself from the first to the last of the affair. All fairness and every courtesy were observed. The preliminaries were settled without a jar; you won the word and the choice of position fell to me. You fronted me halfway the line of fire, held yourself in position to be equally heard, and delivered the word aloud, distinctly and fairly as prescribed. My eyes were turned upon Mr. Cilley to see if he observed the terms, and he fired first, nearly about the count 'One,' Graves last about the word 'Two.'

"Mr. Cilley's ball struck the ground between your position and mine, forty steps from his stand. Graves missed him the first shot. Mr. Cilley was evidently disturbed by losing his shot and firing too quick. You ran to him and something passed which showed Mr. Cilley was excited and, I knew, would make no concession without another fire.

"Then, in turn, Mr. Graves lost his shot at the second exchange. He had a large, coarse hand, and no sense of touch fine enough for a hair-trigger, and no experience with firearms. My orders to him, therefore, were to hold his rifle cocked, hair-trigger set, according to terms, horizontal; at the word 'Fire' to push his gun forward, so as to bring the breech firmly to his shoulder and then level the sight on the vertical, covering his antagonist's person, and to fire when he raised as high as the hip of his antagonist; and to insure deliberation and to prevent losing his shot *to keep his finger* out of the spanner until the instant of pulling the trigger. This he did the first time, and he fired plenty quick enough. But the second shot, whilst I was forty yards off at my position, Mr. Menefee (he and Crittenden stood on either side of Graves, as Duncan and Bynum did on either side of Cilley), when he put the rifle in Graves' hand, told him he fired too slow the first time, and upon Graves telling him of my orders, he, Menefee, objected to it and prevailed on him to put his finger in the spanner.

"The result was as I had predicted. At the word 'Fire,' and as he pushed his gun forward and raised the breech to his shoulder it was discharged into the ground not three feet from his toes. With his eye fixed on Cilley, seeing no smoke and feeling no recoil, he was unconscious that his gun was fired, and raised and stood pulling at his trigger when he received Cilley's fire again about the count 'Two.' He stood still pulling at his trigger until the count was out. Thinking he was writhing from a wound, I ran to him and he dropped the breech of his rifle to the ground, blew in the muzzle and exclaimed:

"'Why, this gun is discharged!'

"He and Menefee at once explained the cause. But he was very much mystified and nothing could have prevented him from demanding another exchange of shots. When you came up—as you did every time to inquire whether Graves was satisfied—you could receive but one answer: not without some disclaimer—and Graves' awkwardness caused me to give you the notice I did, so much denounced, that after the third fire I would demand a shortening of the distance.

"By the time of the third exchange of shots both were well trained, were deliberate, and Graves strictly obeyed my orders. At the count 'Two,' or a moment before, Mr. Cilley fired, and about an instant after 'Two' Graves fired and made the vertical line shot just above the hip. Thus ended the fight.

"Both of Cilley's last two shots were very fine; they passed through the fence logs just behind Graves, one at the elevation of his breast, the other in a line perpendicular to the first and at the elevation of the hip. If his coat had been unbuttoned both balls would have perforated its lapels. His life was saved by his position. The wind blew steadily fresh obliquely against Mr. Cilley's ball. I was sure the aim would be at the centre of Graves' body, and allowing about from four to six inches for the deflection to the left of Cilley and right of Graves, I selected the position I did, though disadvantageous in other respects."

There was never a dispute about any facts between the representatives of Graves and Cilley. Mr. Cilley fought with weapons of his own selection, and the duel was as nearly fair as any duel can be. He shot to kill; only missed his opponent's vitals by miscalculating the force of the wind; was himself killed rather by chance than by the skill of his adversary; and, as he was unquestionably a brave man and had accepted that arbitrament, no reproach would ever have escaped his lips if he might have spoken.

But the Graves-Cilley duel made a tremendous storm throughout the country. Nothing was done about it officially, for dueling was countenanced, more or less, but it was a long time before the bitterness and recrimination about the Graves-Cilley duel subsided.

It was brought up against Clay in his next candidacy, and his attempts to shuffle off responsibility upon others caused a breach between him and my father, who charged him with selfishly seeking to relieve himself from the odium of a duel for which he, more than any living man, was responsible.

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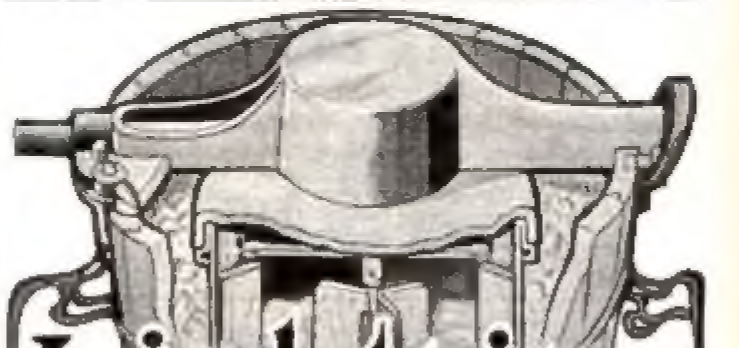

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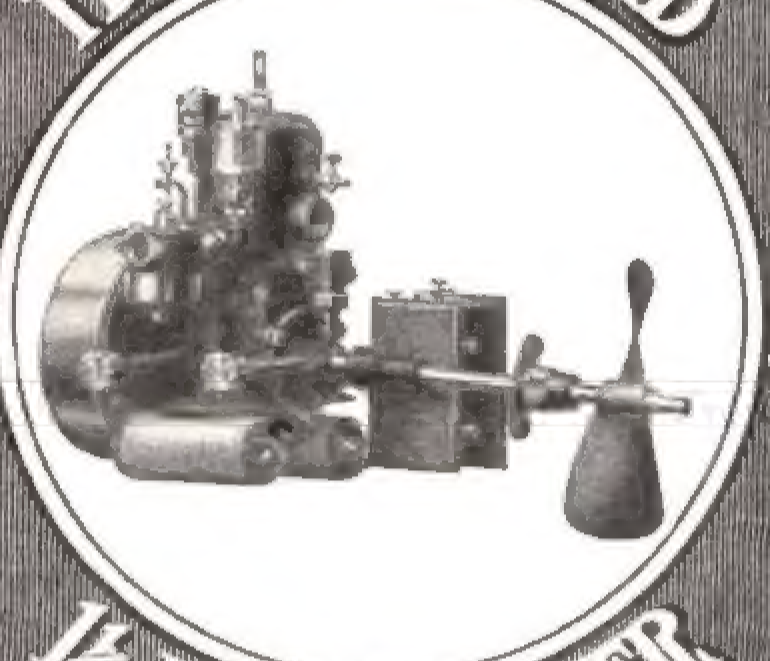

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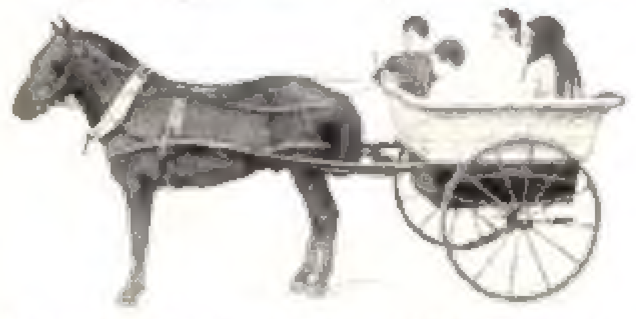

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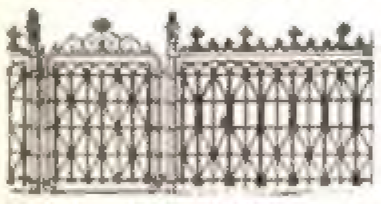

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to coax him to eat it either, Mother, for its delicious rich flavor when eaten with cream and sugar is just what he craves most for.

Egg-O-See keeps the blood cool and is the ideal summer food.

Give him some tomorrow—"there won't be no leavin's."

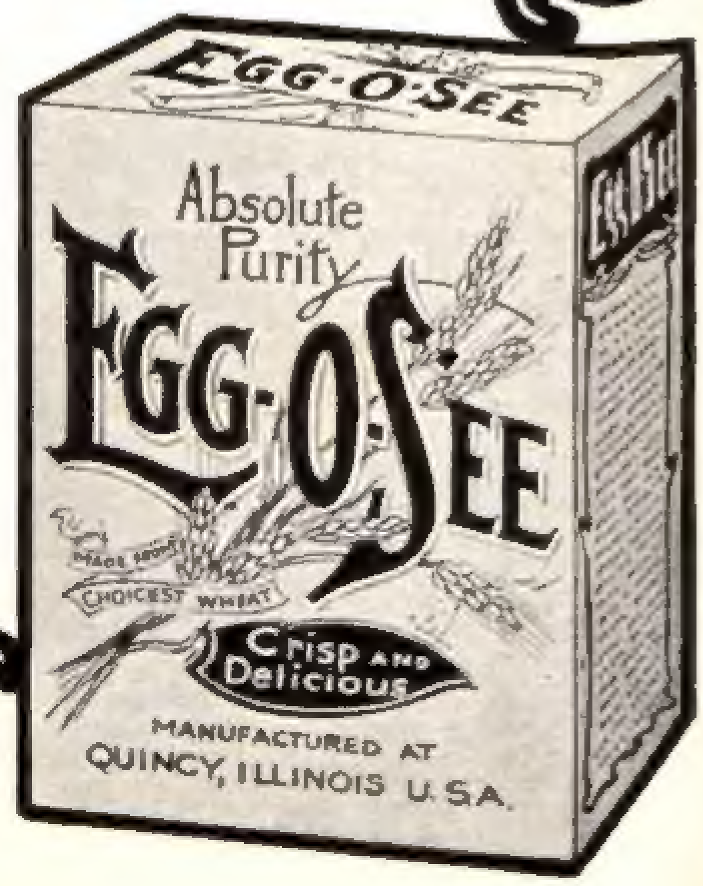
Prepared under conditions of scrupulous cleanliness.

Every grocer in the country sells EGG-O-SEE—the whole wheat cereal. If your grocer has not received his supply, mail us 10 cents and his name (15 cents west of the Rocky Mountains) and we will send you a package of EGG-O-SEE and a copy of the book, **"-back to nature."**

FREE "-back to nature" book

Our 32-page book, **"-back to nature,"** outlines a plan of right living, including menus for 7 days and recipes for preparing the necessary dishes, based on a whole wheat diet, with suggestions for bathing, eating and exercise, illustrated from life, exceedingly simple and attractive. By following its precepts, abounding and vigorous health is sure to result.

Published to sell at 25 cents a copy, this handsomely illustrated book will be mailed FREE to anyone who writes, as long as this edition lasts. Address

EGG-O-SEE CEREAL COMPANY
458-508 Front Street **Quincy, Illinois**